

## **Chapter 2**

### **STATE RAIL SYSTEM**

#### **Railroad Companies**

Idaho is served by two Class I Railroads,<sup>1</sup> the Burlington Northern and the Union Pacific. In addition, service is provided by six regional or local railroads: Montana Rail Link, the Camas Prairie Railroad, the St. Maries River Railroad, the Eastern Idaho Railroad, the Blue Mountain Railroad, and the Idaho Northern and Pacific Railroad. Together they comprise a 1,940-mile state rail system (see Table 2-1). The state's railroads are illustrated on Figure 2-1.

#### **Burlington Northern (BN)**

In 1994, BN operated 368 miles of a 22,189-mile system in Idaho, including 174 on the Camas Prairie Railroad. Idaho is one of the 25 states (and two Canadian Provinces) served by the carrier. The BN operates a vast national system from the Pacific Northwest to the Midwest and Gulf Coast. The BN's main line from Chicago to Spokane passes through the northern Idaho Panhandle via Sandpoint. The railroad's local service territory is limited to the northern portion of the State. Lumber or wood and farm products comprise its principal Idaho commodities.

#### **Union Pacific (UP)**

The state's largest railroad operated 1,096 miles within Idaho in 1994 (plus trackage rights over the Camas prairie) and owns another 25 miles which were not operated in 1994. The total system operates 17,499 route miles in 19 states. Similar to the BN, the UP operates a vast national system from the Pacific Northwest and California to the Midwest and Gulf Coast. The UP's main line between the Pacific Northwest and the Midwest generally follows the Snake River in Southern Idaho, where there is also a network of feeder lines. Another main line runs from Silver Bow, MT to Ogden, UT via Pocatello. Although the state's UP mileage is concentrated in southern Idaho, some branch lines are operated in the northern portion of the state, as well as UP's line from Spokane to Eastport, Idaho, that provides a connection with the Canadian Pacific Railroad.

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<sup>1</sup> Carriers having revenues in excess of \$250 million annually.

**Table 2-1**

**RAIL MILEAGE IN IDAHO  
1995**

Union Pacific Railroad	1,096
Burlington Northern Railroad	194
Montana Rail Link	34
Camas Prairie Railroad	174
St. Maries River Railroad	71
Eastern Idaho Railroad	267
Idaho Northern and Pacific Railroad	102
Blue Mountain Railroad	2
<b>Total Mileage:</b>	<b>1,940</b>

Source: Idaho Transportation Department

**Montana Rail Link (MRL)**

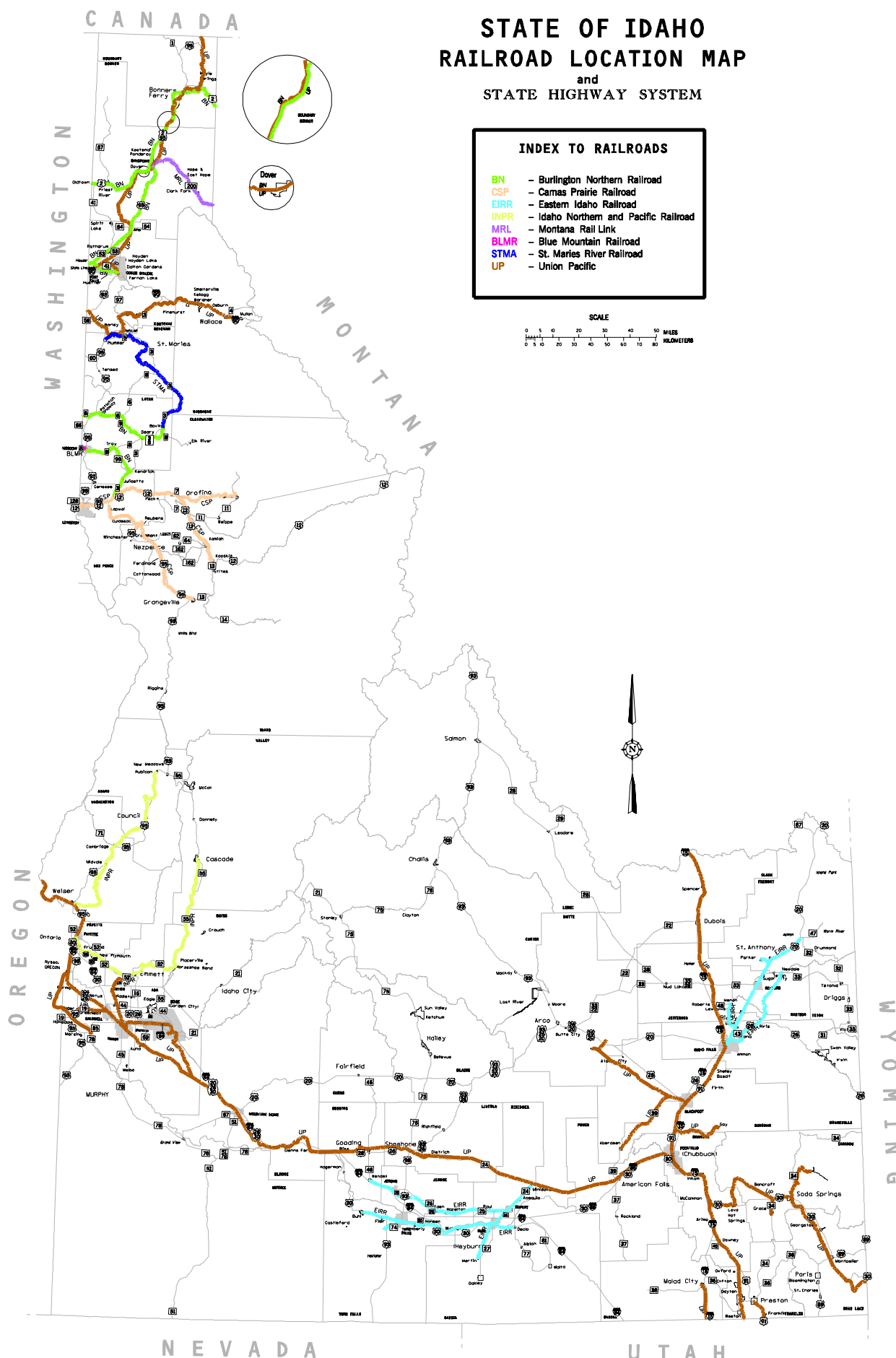
This railroad was created as a BN spin-off of 943 miles of track. It operates in three states, Montana, Idaho and Washington, reaching the latter over trackage rights over the BN from Sandpoint, Idaho to Spokane. The carrier operates over 84 miles of track in Idaho including the trackage rights.

**Camas Prairie (CSP)**

The Camas Prairie is jointly owned and operated by BN and UP. Most of the railroad trackage in Idaho, however, is owned by BN having been built by its predecessor Northern Pacific. Of CSP's total 244 miles, 174 miles are located in Idaho. The railroad is located in northern Idaho and its operations are centered around Lewiston. Principal traffic consists of logs, lumber, and wood products and grain.

**St. Maries River Railroad (STMA)**

Formed from trackage abandoned by the Milwaukee Road in 1980 as a result of its bankruptcy, the carrier's entire 71 miles are located in Idaho (Plummer to St. Maries to Bovill). This common carrier railroad is owned by the Potlatch Corporation. Principal traffic consists of logs, lumber and wood products.



# STATE OF IDAHO RAILROAD LOCATION MAP and STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM



## INDEX TO RAILROADS

- BN - Burlington Northern Railroad
- CSP - Camas Prairie Railroad
- EIRR - Eastern Idaho Railroad
- INPR - Idaho Northern and Pacific Railroad
- MRL - Montana Rail Link
- BLMR - Blue Mountain Railroad
- STMA - St. Maries River Railroad
- UP - Union Pacific

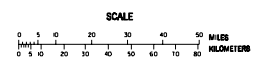


Figure 2-1

### **Eastern Idaho Railroad (EIRR)**

The Eastern Idaho Railroad was formed from two clusters comprised of several Union Pacific branch lines that the carrier spun off in south central and eastern Idaho in 1993. The lines total 267 miles in length. One group of lines serves the area north of Idaho Falls including the communities of Newdale, Menan, St. Anthony and Ashton, while the other group serves the Twin Falls area, including the communities of Burley, Rupert, Buhl, Wendell and Twin Falls. Farm products, principally grain, beans and potatoes, are the major commodities transported by the railroad, combined with fertilizers, aggregates and lumber. The railroad is affiliated with WATCO, Inc. of Pittsburg, Kansas.

### **Idaho Northern and Pacific Railroad (INPR)**

This short line operation was also formed from branch lines spun off by the UP in southwestern Idaho and northeastern Oregon. The Idaho lines total 102 miles in length. The Idaho lines consist of lines from Emmett to Horseshoe Bend to Cascade, and Emmett to Payette. Another line from Weiser to Council to Rubicon was approved for abandonment in late 1995 following the closure of the Boise Cascade mill at Council. The operating company is owned by the Rio Grande Pacific Corporation of Fort Worth, Texas. Primary traffic consists of logs, lumber and wood products.

### **Blue Mountain Railroad (BLMR)**

The Blue Mountain Railroad is comprised of two separate segments, both of which are UP spinoffs. One serves southwest Washington State with a line which crosses the Oregon border, and the other the Palouse Region of Eastern Washington with a line segment which crosses into Idaho at Moscow. The railroad in Idaho is two miles long and serves many of the same rail users as the BN in Moscow. The railroad is also affiliated with WATCO, Inc. like the EIRR.

## **Railroad Mergers**

### **BN/SF**

During 1995, the \$4.7 billion merger of the Burlington Northern Railroad Company (BN) and the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company (SF) was approved by the Interstate Commerce Commission. The new railroad, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF), now has a single line system with approximately 31,000 route miles, and expected revenues exceeding \$8 billion per year.

Because the BNSF only serves Northern Idaho, the impacts of the merger on Idaho will probably not be overly significant. Northern Idaho shippers will see some benefits by single-line service to California, Arizona, and the Gulf of Mexico ports. However, the percentage of BN traffic (primarily forest products) originating in Northern Idaho (prior to the merger) that terminated on the SF was quite small compared to terminations on other railroads.

### **UP/CNW**

In February of 1995, the Interstate Commerce Commission authorized the acquisition of control of the Chicago Northwestern Railway (CNW) by the Union Pacific (UP). The UP exercised its right to control the CNW later that year. The primary advantage to Idaho shippers are a shorter route and single line service to Chicago and interchange with major eastern rail carriers. However, service levels on the combined railroads actually declined for some commodities during the start up period, but these problems are being addressed by the UP.

### **UP/SP**

The Union Pacific and Southern Pacific Railroads (UP/SP) submitted a merger application to the Interstate Commerce Commission, now Surface Transportation Board, on November 30, 1995. The proposed UP/SP railroad would become North America's largest railroad with 34,000 miles of track in 25 states and combined revenues of \$9.5 billion. The UP/SP merger will create a more efficient, stronger railroad that would appear to offer rail shippers a competitive alternative to the recently combined Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Railroad (BN/SF) that neither UP nor SP could offer on its own. The new UP/SP system will offer faster transit times, more reliable service, shorter routes, improved equipment supply, new market opportunities and increase competition to many shippers.

Because the UP/SP merger would result in only two major railroads west of the Mississippi, many western rail shippers expressed concerns about loss of rail competition. In an effort to allay those concerns and ward off opposition from shippers and BN/SF, the UP/SP and BN/SF entered into an unprecedented trackage rights and line sale agreement on September 26, 1995, which will allow BN/SF to serve only those shippers who currently have access to UP and SP and would lose two railroad competition. Because the SP does not serve Idaho, there are no such "2-to-1" situations in the state.

Clearly, this merger offers some opportunities for Idaho shippers, particularly faster and shorter single-line service to numerous points including Oregon, California, Arizona, Colorado, Texas, Louisiana, the Midwest and Mexico. A number of Idaho shippers, the Governor, and other

elected officials have filed statements in support of the merger. But there has been concern expressed by some Idaho shippers and associations that those Idaho shippers currently captive to only one railroad should have similar consideration on the BN/SF UP/SP agreement as those in the potential "2-to-1" situation, and have two railroads serving Southern Idaho.

A final written decision is expected by August 1996, if the Surface Transportation Board follows the same expedited schedule used in processing the BN/SF application. States, shippers, railroads, and others will have the opportunity to comment and request conditions during the proceedings.

### **Passenger Service**

Both north and south Idaho are served by passenger trains operated by Amtrak. The routes are the subject of Figure 2-2. An excerpt from Amtrak's National Timetable is shown on Page 2-6.

#### **Amtrak Routes**

Service in Northern Idaho is provided over BN's main line track through Bonners Ferry, Sandpoint and Rathdrum. Amtrak trains 7 and 8, the west and eastbound Empire Builder, are scheduled in Sandpoint at 12:18 a.m. and 2:52 a.m., respectively. The train formerly operated on a daily basis but became a subject of Amtrak cutbacks in February 1995 to four days per week west of St. Paul, Minnesota. Sandpoint is the only stop in Idaho for the Empire Builder which runs between Chicago and Portland/Seattle. Service is also available at Spokane, Washington for northern Idaho passengers.

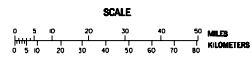
Southern Idaho is also served by a Chicago to Portland/Seattle train, the Pioneer (Amtrak trains 25 and 26). The Pioneer's route in Idaho takes it from Ogden through Pocatello, Shoshone, Boise, Nampa and Weiser. Idaho stops are scheduled at Pocatello, Shoshone, Boise and Nampa. Service is also available at Ontario, Oregon for southern Idaho passengers. The westbound train is scheduled to pass through Idaho in the early morning and the eastbound in late evening. Its schedule was reduced several years ago from daily to three days per week. The three days are coordinated with the days the Empire Builder does not run to provide the equivalent of daily service between Chicago and the Pacific Northwest.

# STATE OF IDAHO RAILROAD LOCATION MAP



## INDEX TO RAILROADS

BN	- Burlington Northern Railroad
CSP	- Camas Prairie Railroad
EIRR	- Eastern Idaho Railroad
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BLMR	- Blue Mountain Railroad
STMA	- St. Maries River Railroad
UP	- Union Pacific



## RAIL PASSENGER SERVICE

- EMPIRE BUILDER
- PIONEER
- STOPS

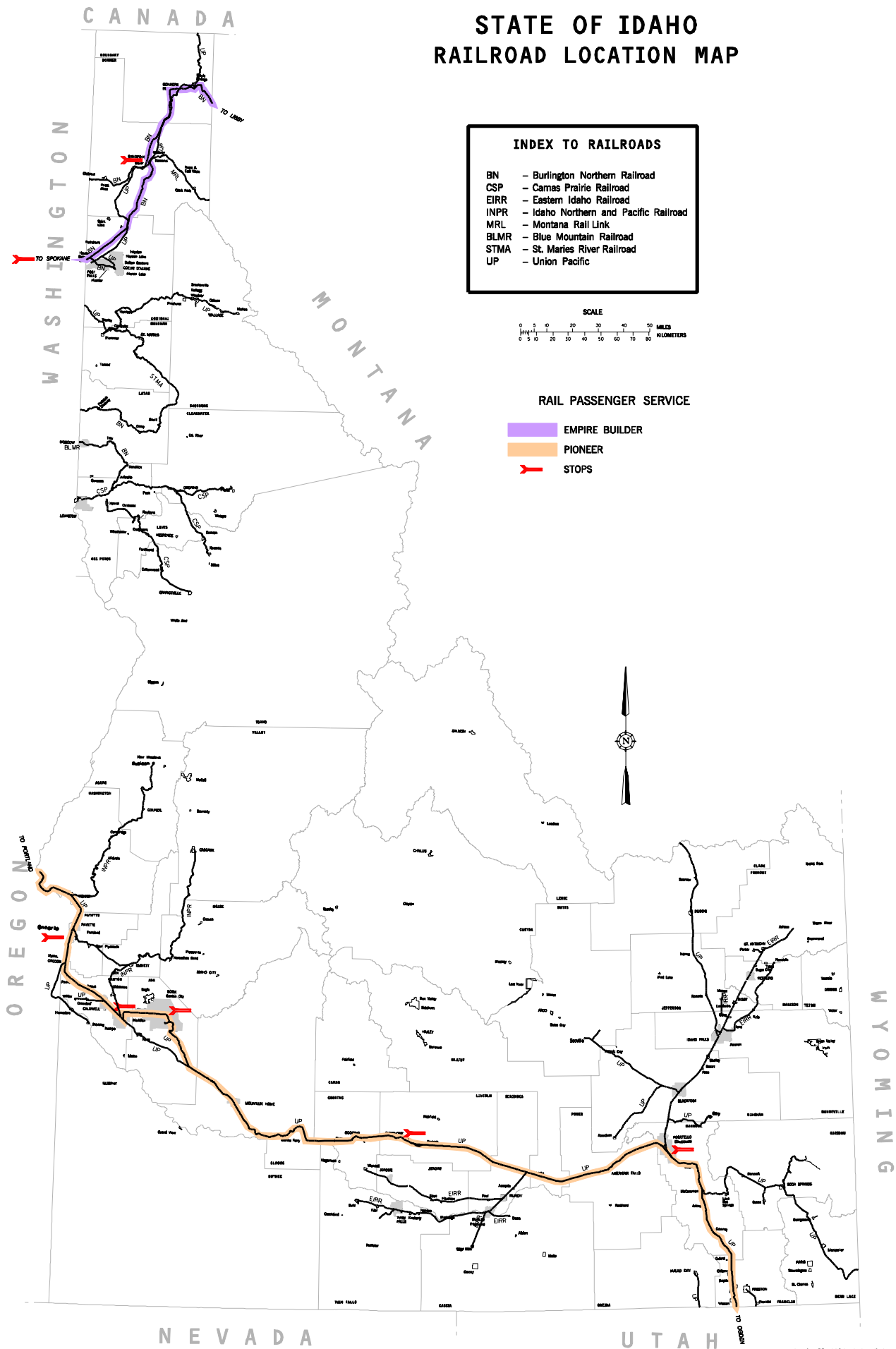


Figure 2-2

## **Ridership**

The number of passengers boarding and alighting Amtrak trains in Idaho is the subject of Table 2-2. After exhibiting an increase from 1987 to 1988, Idaho ridership has displayed a constantly decreasing trend from a high of 44,548 in 1988 to a low of 17,327 in 1995. The most significant decline occurred between 1993 and 1995. The only Idaho stop on the route of the Empire Builder, Sandpoint, has been more consistent than the remainder of the state, but even it suffered a significant loss of patronage between 1993 and 1995.

The most utilized station in Idaho is Boise, which has accounted for almost 40 percent of the state's ridership over the nine years of record. It is followed by Pocatello with 27 percent, Sandpoint with 15 percent and Nampa with 12 percent. However, the ridership in Boise and Nampa has recently decreased more than other locations in Idaho.

## **Service Concerns**

In October, 1995, Amtrak officials advised that rail passenger service on the Pioneer, serving Southern Idaho is being considered for elimination. The reason is that Amtrak is facing budget cuts from Congress, and Amtrak officials are examining their less productive routes. Ridership on the Pioneer in Idaho has fallen about 50 percent in the last few years, from 35,000 in 1990 and 1991 to 17,500 in 1994.

Decreased ridership in Idaho could be attributed to four factors:

- 1) Service was reduced from daily to tri-weekly several years ago;
- 2) The west bound train was also rescheduled several years ago resulting in a 4:00 a.m. departure from Boise;
- 3) Cheap airline fares (e.g. Southwest Airlines) to/from larger cities on the route (ridership down much more in Boise/Nampa than other stations).
- 4) There is no public transportation available at Amtrak stations (this includes Sandpoint as well), since the Idaho stops are at night.

Department staff has been working directly with Amtrak and other states in developing strategies for retaining service in Southern Idaho and helping Amtrak reduce costs and increase ridership. These include train rescheduling, rerouting, route shortening, and other actions.

**Table 2-2  
IDAHO  
AMTRAK RIDERSHIP  
1987 - 1995**

<b>STATION</b>	<b>1987</b>	<b>1988</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Boise	14,405	17,900	19,273	18,314	16,913	14,680	13,059	7,226	5,481	127,251
Nampa	6,246	6,631	6,342	4,846	4,877	3,828	3,231	1,611	1,201	38,813
Pocatello	10,993	11,492	10,684	9,413	10,693	10,489	10,605	7,073	5,272	86,714
Sandpoint	5,200	5,626	5,196	5,030	5,761	6,015	5,911	4,909	4,123	47,771
Shoshone	2,471	2,899	2,829	2,707	2,955	2,914	2,538	1,664	1,250	22,227
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39,315</b>	<b>44,548</b>	<b>44,324</b>	<b>40,310</b>	<b>41,199</b>	<b>37,926</b>	<b>35,344</b>	<b>22,483</b>	<b>17,327</b>	<b>322,776</b>

Source: National Railroad Passenger Corporation

In November 1995 Amtrak staff developed a marketing plan intended to increase ridership and reduce costs on the Pioneer. This marketing plan was approved by the Amtrak Board of Directors on December 5, 1995. This plan is effective through Federal Fiscal Year 1996, after which the future of the train will be reassessed. There will be increased ad campaigns and in-station events in the cities along the route, plus sponsorship/participation in local events along the route. Some of the ads will be keyed to site-specific attractions (e.g. skiing).

Because of significant reductions in Amtrak's budget in the DOT Appropriations Bill, Amtrak is seeking financial, technical and partnering assistance from the states and communities to make the marketing plan a success and hopefully save the train.

### **Freight Traffic**

The description of rail freight in Idaho is organized under the following headings:

- Commodities transported;
- Traffic patterns;
- Through traffic; and,
- Traffic Density

#### **Commodities Transported**

As shown in Table 2-3, almost 19 million tons of freight traffic were originated or terminated by Idaho's two Class 1 railroads in 1994. Just over 60 percent of the total tonnage was originated in the state, led by farm products (3.8 million tons), nonmetallic minerals (3.0 million tons), lumber or wood products (2.1 million tons), food products (1.6 million tons), and chemicals or allied products (1.1 million tons). These five major commodities comprised 96 percent of all originating commodities.

Major terminating commodities were three of the same ones mentioned above, nonmetallic minerals (3.3 million tons), farm products (1.3 million tons) and chemicals or allied products (0.85 million tons) comprising 76 percent of total terminating tons.

#### **Traffic Patterns**

The movement patterns of Idaho rail commodities, the tonnages involved and the origin and destination states are the subject of the following paragraphs. The data used in these discussions are derived from a different source (the 1993 ICC Waybill Sample) than the

**Table 2-3**

**IDAHO RAIL TRAFFIC  
1994 SUMMARY**

COMMODITY		TONNAGE		
STCC	Description	Originating	Terminating	Total
1	Farm Products	3,768,335	1,285,578	5,050,913
10	Metallic Ores		344,067	344,067
14	Nonmetallic Ores; Except Fuels	2,951,501	327,891	6,223,392
20	Food or Kindred Products	1,631,004	333,635	1,964,639
24	Lumber or Wood Products	2,143,312	259,781	2,403,093
25	Furniture or Fixtures		1,058	1,058
26	Pulp, Paper, or Allied Products	99,431	188,716	288,147
28	Chemicals or Allied Products	1,094,083	849,673	1,943,756
29	Petroleum or Coal Products	2,708	496,371	499,079
30	Rubber or Miscellaneous Plastics Products		1,367	1,367
32	Clay, Concrete, Glass or Stone Products	203,434	17,071	220,505
33	Primary Metal Products	37,210	35,513	74,723
34	Fabricated Metal Products	769	1,116	1,885
35	Machinery; except Electrical	1,075	5,177	6,252
36	Electrical Machinery or Equipment	67	1,051	1,118
37	Transportation Equipment	6,680	10,295	16,975
40	Waste or Scrap Materials Not Identified by Producing Industry	95,775	30,287	126,062
42	Containers, Carrier or Devices, Shipping, Returned Empty	464	6,824	7,288
46	Miscellaneous Mixed Shipments	25,595	14,150	39,745
TOTALS		12,061,443	7,155,621	18,872,996

contents of Table 2-3 (the BN and UP railroads) and are also for a different year, and thus the absolute values are slightly different. Figure 2-3 reveals that overall Idaho was the largest destination for rail traffic that originated in the state. This traffic which both originates and terminates within the state is called intrastate traffic. The next biggest destination is Washington State, followed by Oregon, Montana, Illinois and Texas. Traffic that terminated in Idaho mostly originated in Idaho (the same intrastate traffic mentioned above), with Wyoming origins a distant second, followed by Nebraska, Montana and Washington State, as revealed in Figure 2-4.

It is apparent that the movement of Idaho commodities by rail reflects the resource-based economy of the state. As evidenced from Table 2-3, Idaho rail traffic is dominated by five major commodities.

**Nonmetallic Minerals** - This commodity group generates the largest volume of rail transportation in the state in that the vast majority of it both originates and terminates in the state as evident from inspection of Figure 2-5. Just over 98 percent of the originating traffic is phosphate rock, clay or sand. Virtually the same holds true for rail traffic terminating in the state although there is a significant amount of sulphur (15 percent of the total). Montana is the only state to which any significant volume is shipped from Idaho, and Wyoming is the only state that forwards any significant volume to Idaho. Rail transportation of nonmetallic minerals in Idaho is dominated by the state's agricultural chemical industry.

**Farm Products** - The shipment and receipt of farm products is more diverse geographically than nonmetallic minerals (see Figure 2-6). Outbound farm products, which are almost three times the volume of inbound products, are comprised principally of barley, wheat and potatoes with the largest commodity being wheat (41 percent). Sugar beets made up 14 percent of originating traffic in 1993, but the rail transportation of sugar beets has diminished in Idaho since then. Farm products shipped into Idaho are comprised of corn, barley and cotton seeds. Again in 1993, sugar beets were a large terminating commodity (37 percent) but have diminished as mentioned above. In addition to the large amount of intrastate traffic, significant shipments are made to the neighboring states of Washington and Oregon, presumably for export.

**Lumber or Wood Products** - Eighty-five percent of the rail traffic associated with originating tonnage for this commodity group is comprised of sawlogs, pulpwood chips, and lumber, roughly one half of it the latter. As shown on Figure 2-7, the major destination is Washington

State which receives about 25 percent of the shipments. Only insignificant volumes are received from outside of the state as terminating traffic is principally intrastate.

**Food or Kindred Products** - Rail transportation of this commodity group is dominated by outbound shipments and in 1993, there were no intrastate movements picked up in the Waybill Sample. Destinations for Idaho food products, frozen vegetables, sugar and malt comprise over 80 percent of shipments, are widespread as are origins of food products being shipped into the state (see Figure 2-8). Inbound products consist of a wide variety with soybean meal, beer and ale, prepared feeds and malt extracts comprising the largest tonnages (42 percent of the total).

**Chemicals or Allied Products** - Another commodity group with wide spread origins and destinations as evidenced in Figure 2-9, is chemicals and allied products. Traffic originating in Idaho is dominated by superphosphate and miscellaneous fertilizer compounds (almost 80 percent) with principal destinations in Oregon and California. Inbound chemicals are more diverse but 30 percent of totals are accounted for by ammonia and sulfuric acid and more than likely used in fertilizer production. Major origins lie in Washington State and Utah.

### **Through Traffic**

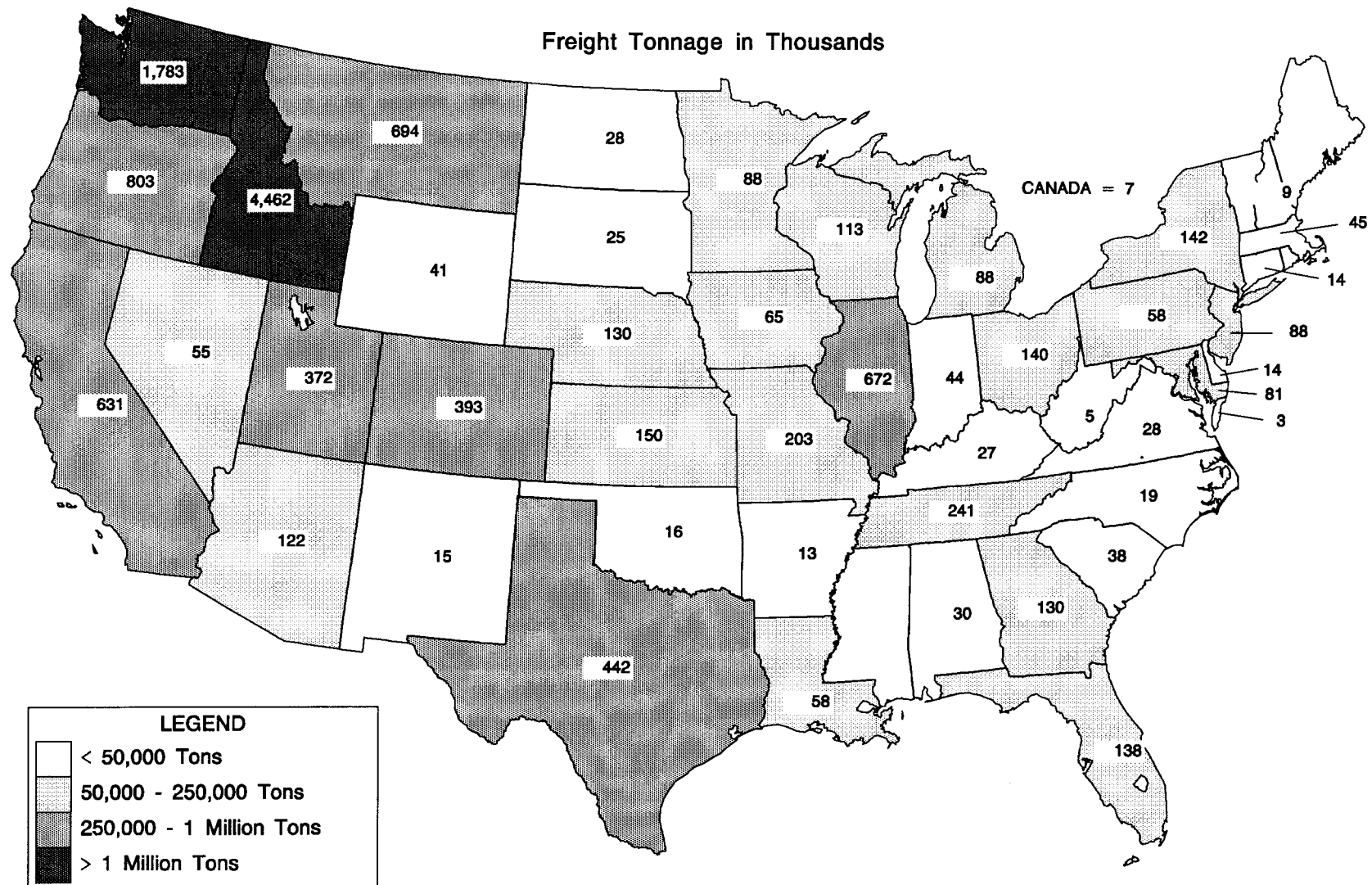
In addition to the traffic discussed above, there is a large quantity of rail traffic which uses the state's rail system with neither origins nor destinations in Idaho. This through or overhead traffic comprised over 55 million tons in 1993 based on the ICC Waybill Sample. The dominant commodity was farm products, accounting for 18 million tons principally with west coast (Washington, Oregon and California) destinations, followed by miscellaneous mixed shipments with just over 8 million tons. The latter commodity group comprises the largest share of the rail intermodal traffic (trailers/containers) with 545,000 units of a total of 853,000, the difference falling into other commodity classifications.

The large amount of through traffic in Idaho is not surprising given the BN, MRL and UP main lines which pass through the state and the location of the state vis-a-vis the location of the major ports of the Pacific Northwest. All of these main lines are classified as principal lines in the FRA rail network.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The FRA has defined a core railroad system of approximately 80,000 miles known as the Principal Railroad Lines. These lines have one or more of the following attributes: Amtrak route; essential for defense (STRACNET and connections); or, transport in excess of 20 million gross ton-miles per mile annually.

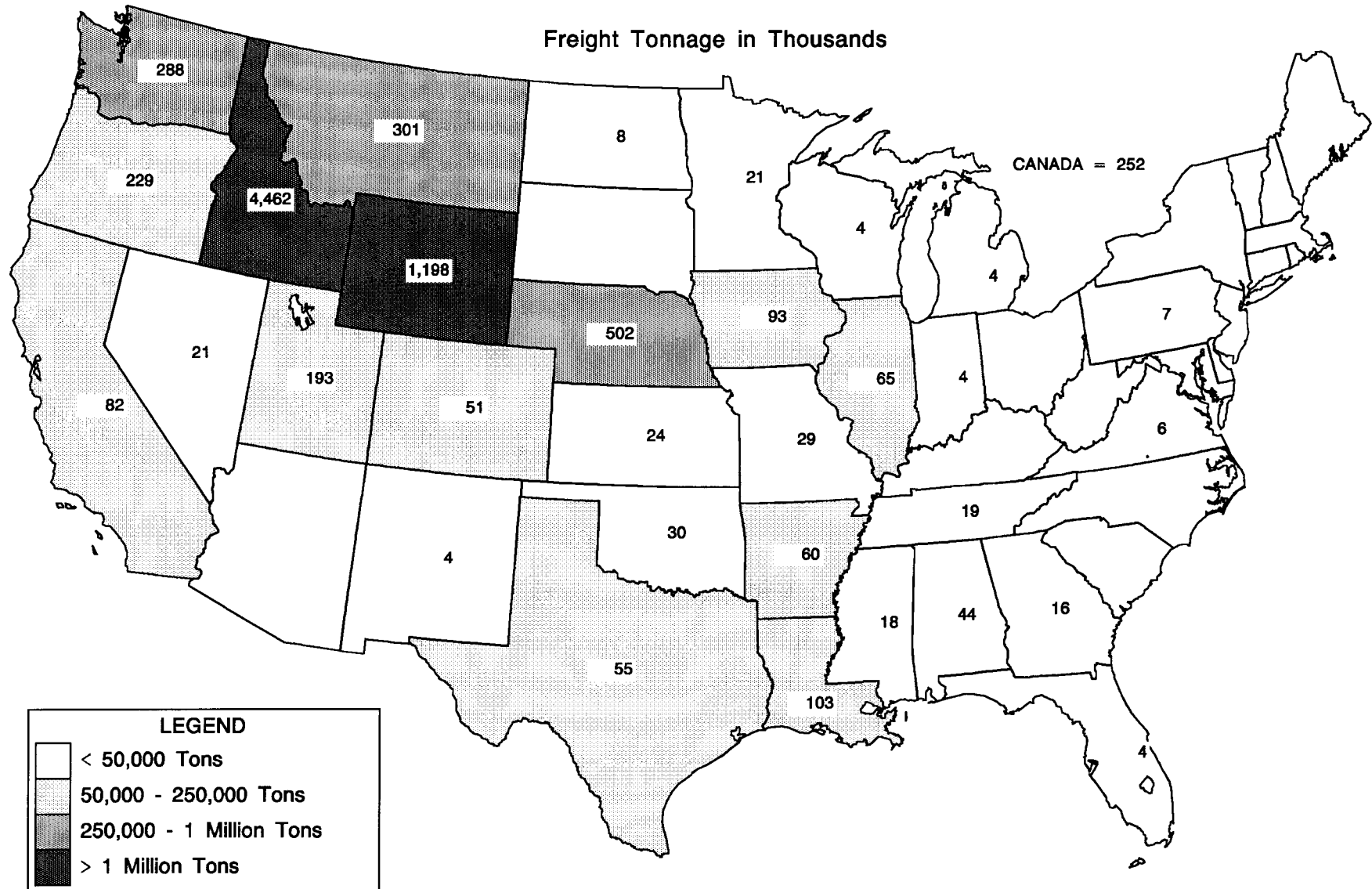
# DESTINATION OF RAIL FREIGHT TONNAGE ORIGINATING IN IDAHO



DATA SOURCE: 1993 ICC Waybill Sample

Figure 2-3

# ORIGINATION OF RAIL FREIGHT TONNAGE TERMINATING IN IDAHO



DATA SOURCE: 1993 ICC Waybill Sample

Figure 2-4

# NONMETALLIC MINERALS; EXCEPT FUELS

## DESTINATION OF RAIL FREIGHT TONNAGE

### ORIGINATING IN IDAHO



## ORIGINATION OF RAIL FREIGHT TONNAGE

### TERMINATING IN IDAHO

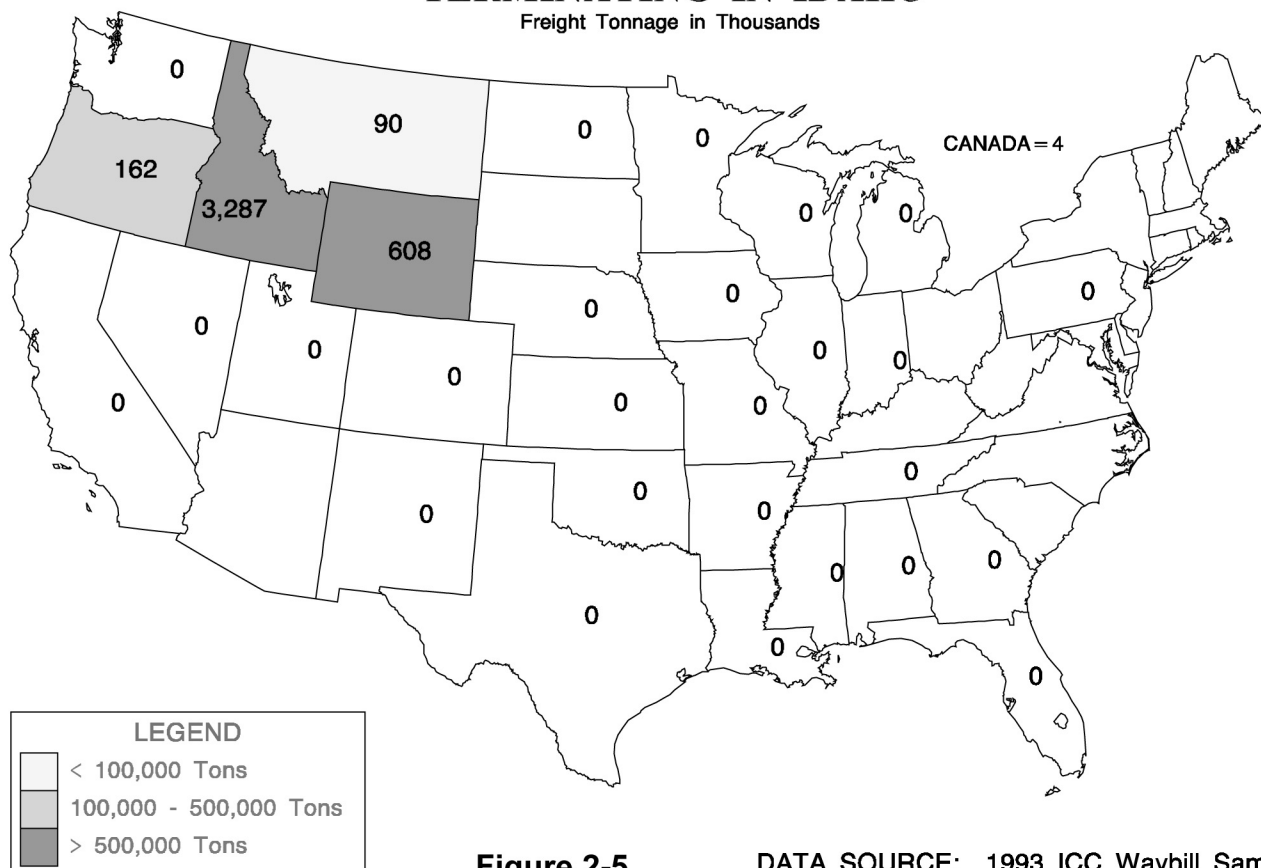


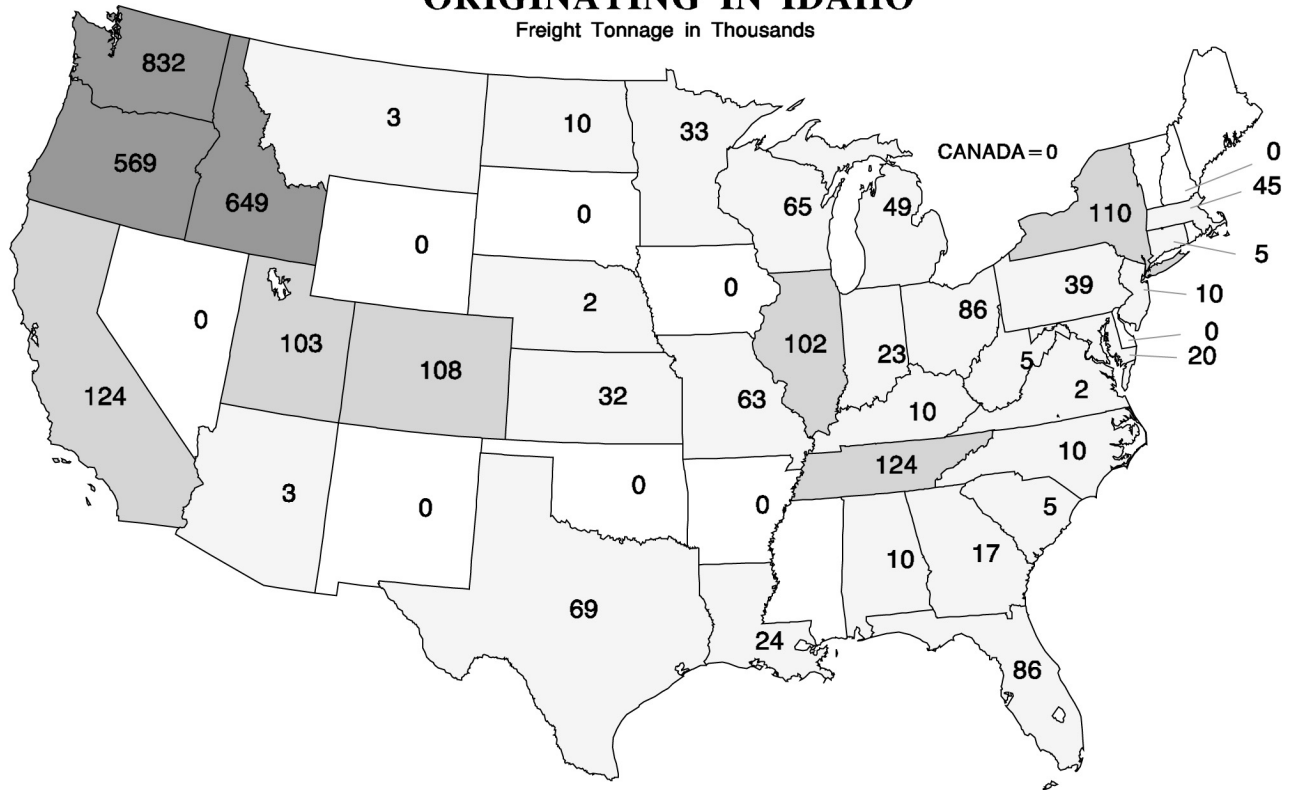
Figure 2-5

DATA SOURCE: 1993 ICC Waybill Sample

# FARM PRODUCTS

## DESTINATION OF RAIL FREIGHT TONNAGE ORIGINATING IN IDAHO

Freight Tonnage in Thousands



## ORIGINATION OF RAIL FREIGHT TONNAGE TERMINATING IN IDAHO

Freight Tonnage in Thousands

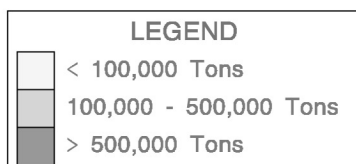
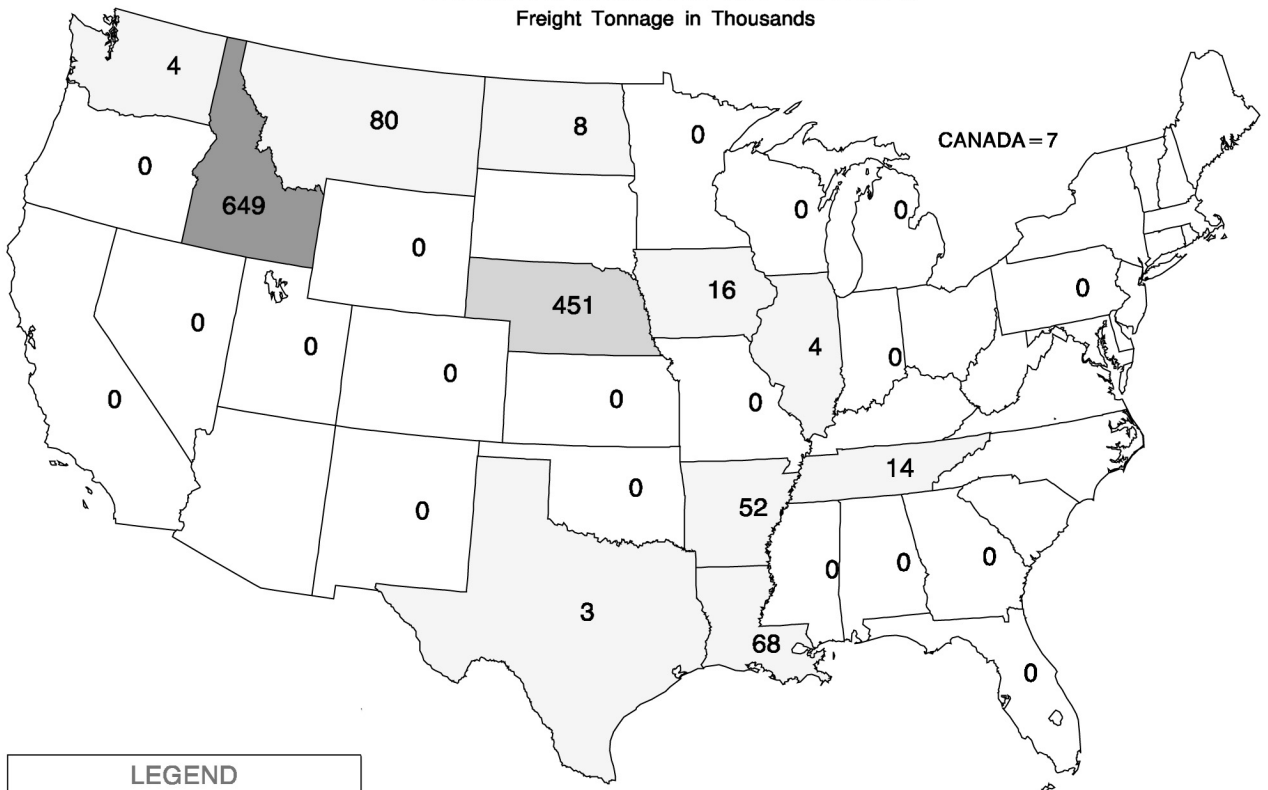
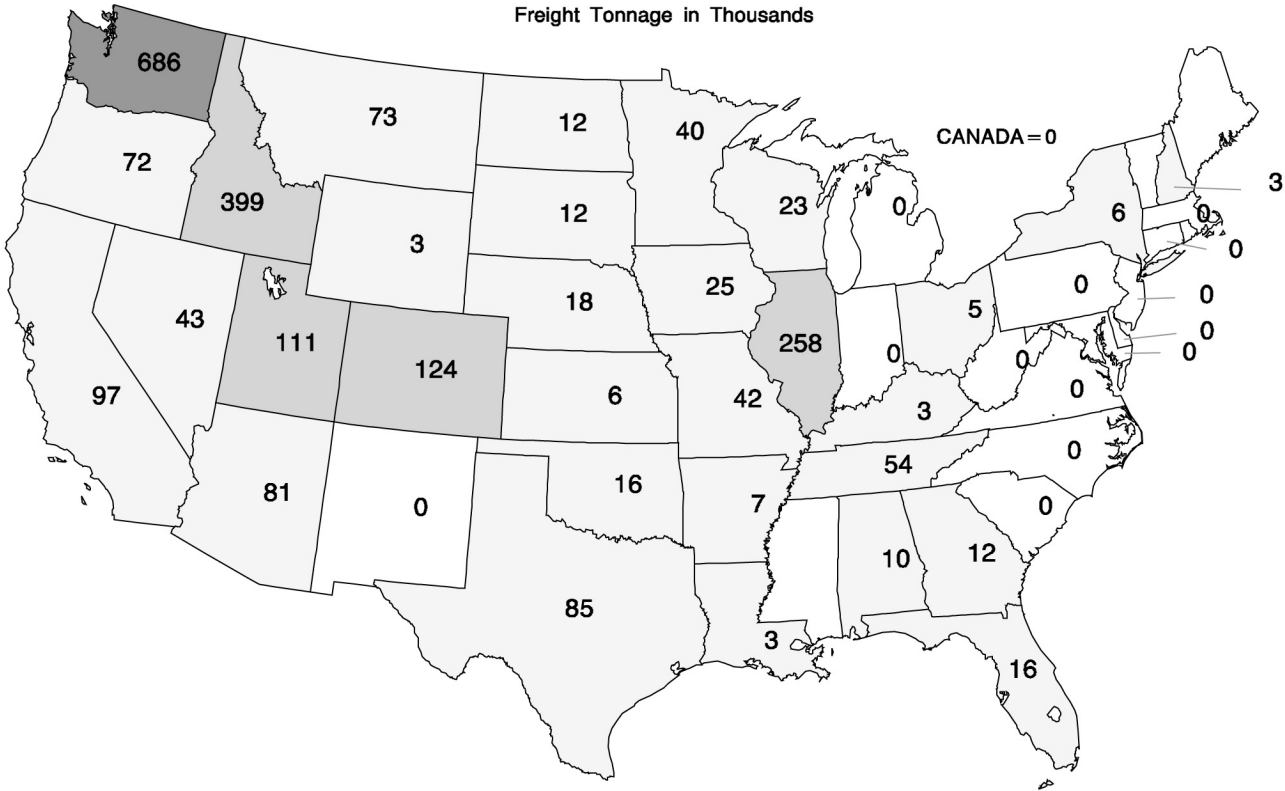


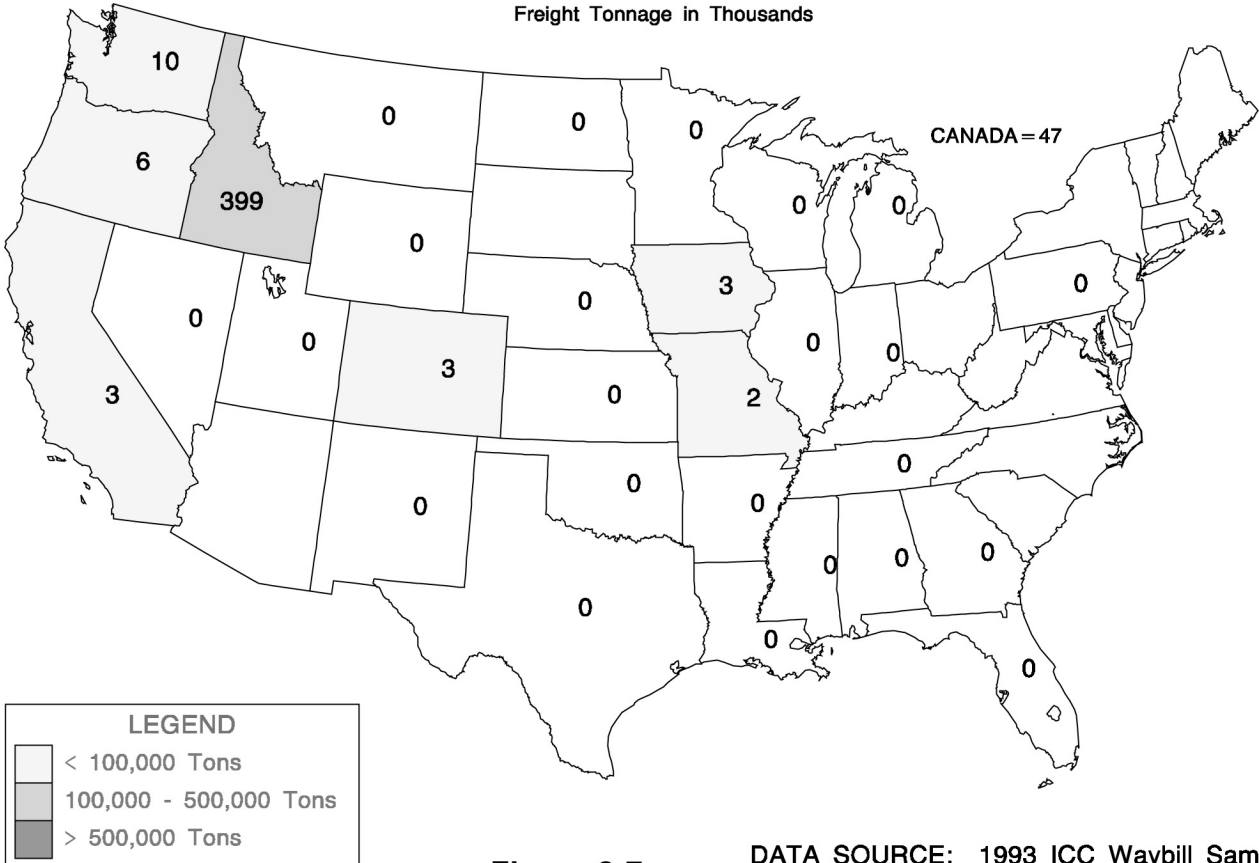
Figure 2-6

DATA SOURCE: 1993 ICC Waybill Sample

# LUMBER OR WOOD PRODUCTS DESTINATION OF RAIL FREIGHT TONNAGE ORIGINATING IN IDAHO



# ORIGINATION OF RAIL FREIGHT TONNAGE TERMINATING IN IDAHO



LEGEND

- < 100,000 Tons
- 100,000 - 500,000 Tons
- > 500,000 Tons

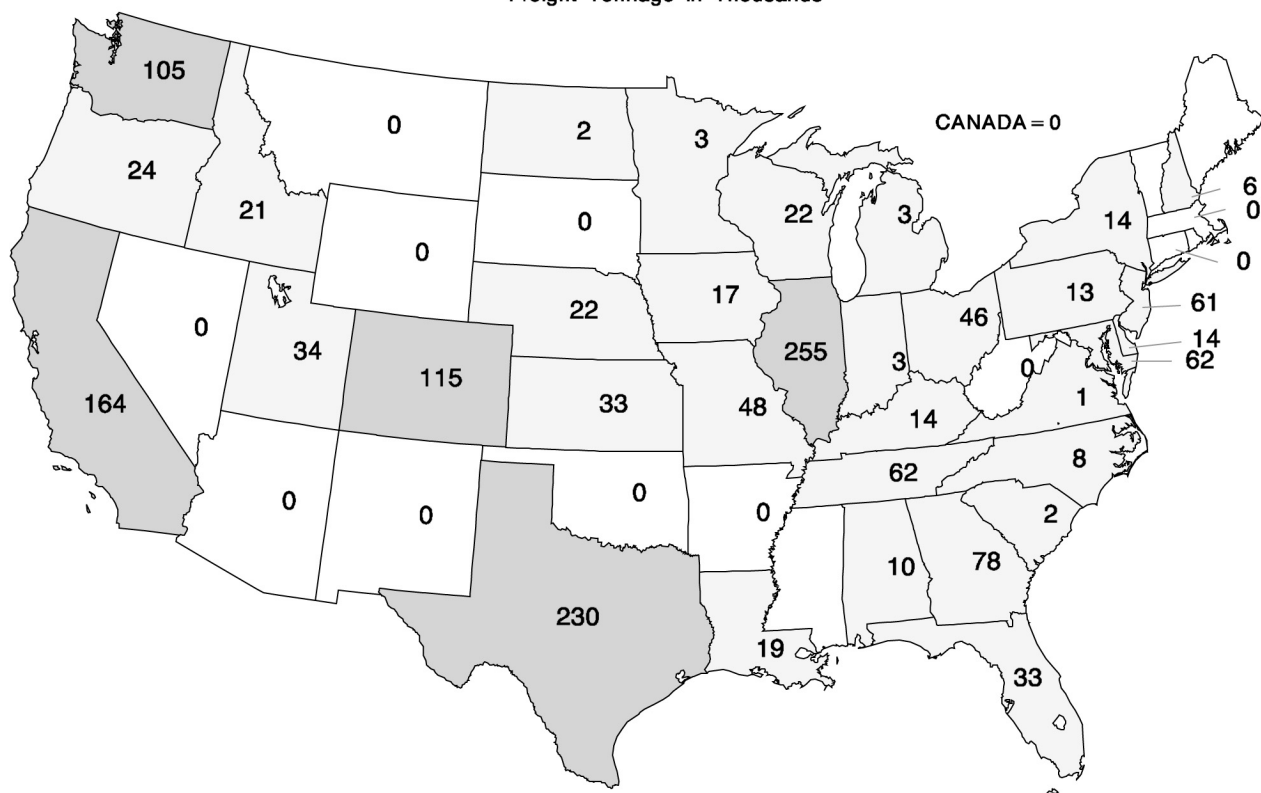
Figure 2-7 DATA SOURCE: 1993 ICC Waybill Sample

# FOOD OR KINDRED PRODUCTS

## DESTINATION OF RAIL FREIGHT TONNAGE

### ORIGINATING IN IDAHO

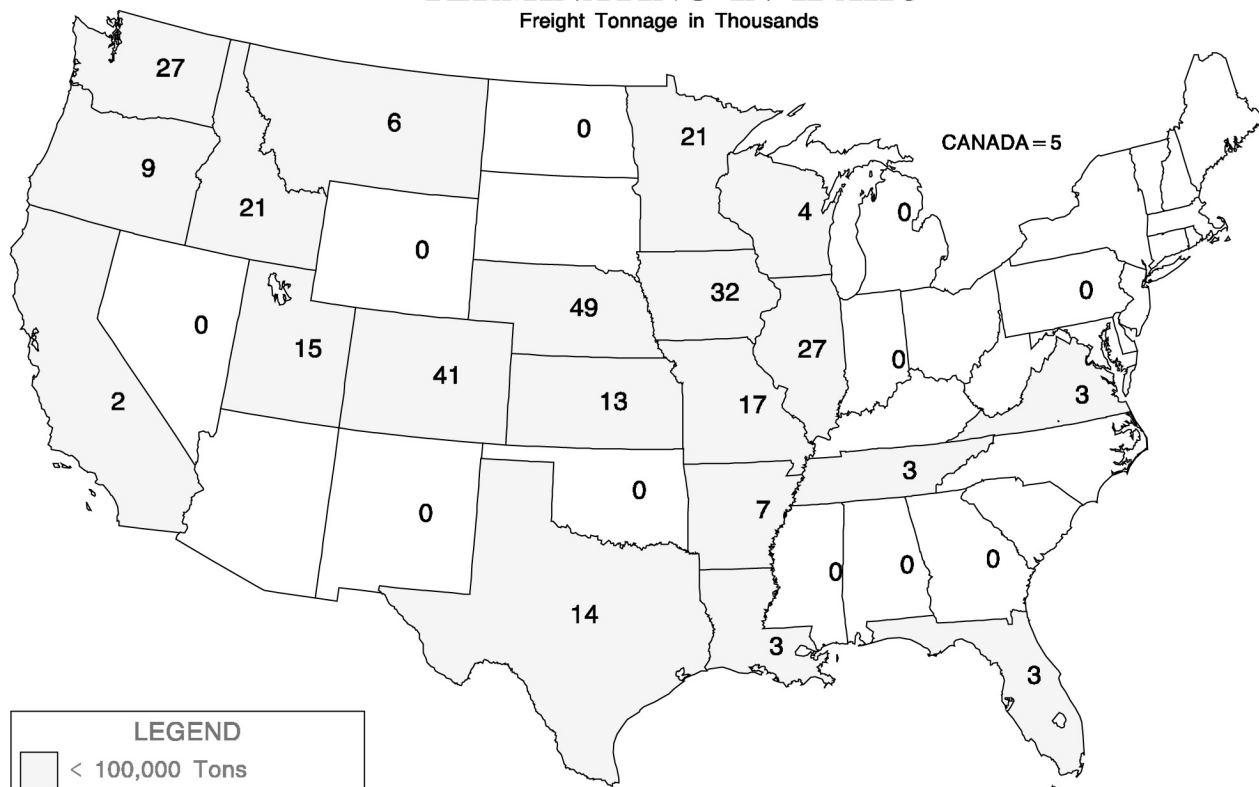
Freight Tonnage in Thousands



## ORIGINATION OF RAIL FREIGHT TONNAGE

### TERMINATING IN IDAHO

Freight Tonnage in Thousands



#### LEGEND

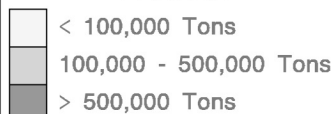


Figure 2-8

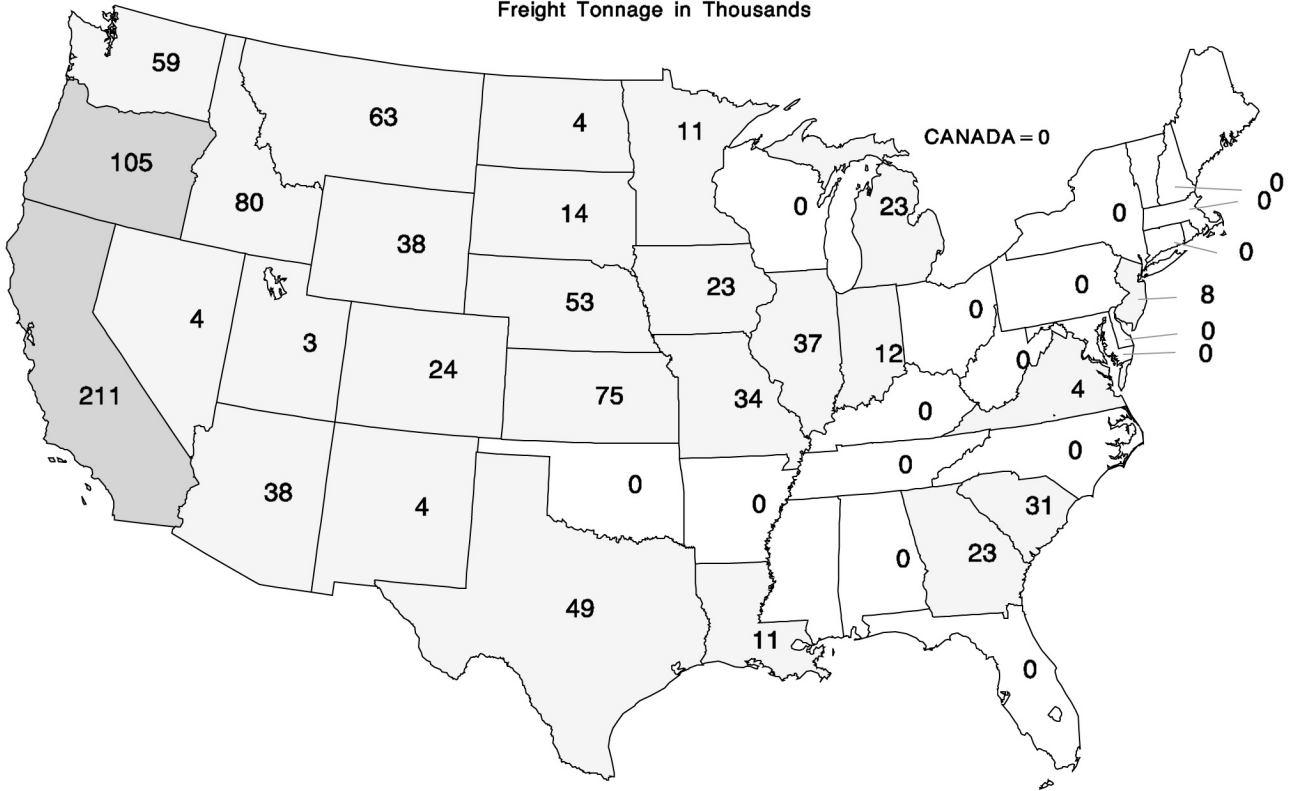
DATA SOURCE: 1993 ICC Waybill Sample

# CHEMICAL OR ALLIED PRODUCTS

## DESTINATION OF RAIL FREIGHT TONNAGE

### ORIGINATING IN IDAHO

Freight Tonnage in Thousands



## ORIGINATION OF RAIL FREIGHT TONNAGE

### TERMINATING IN IDAHO

Freight Tonnage in Thousands

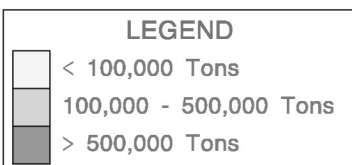
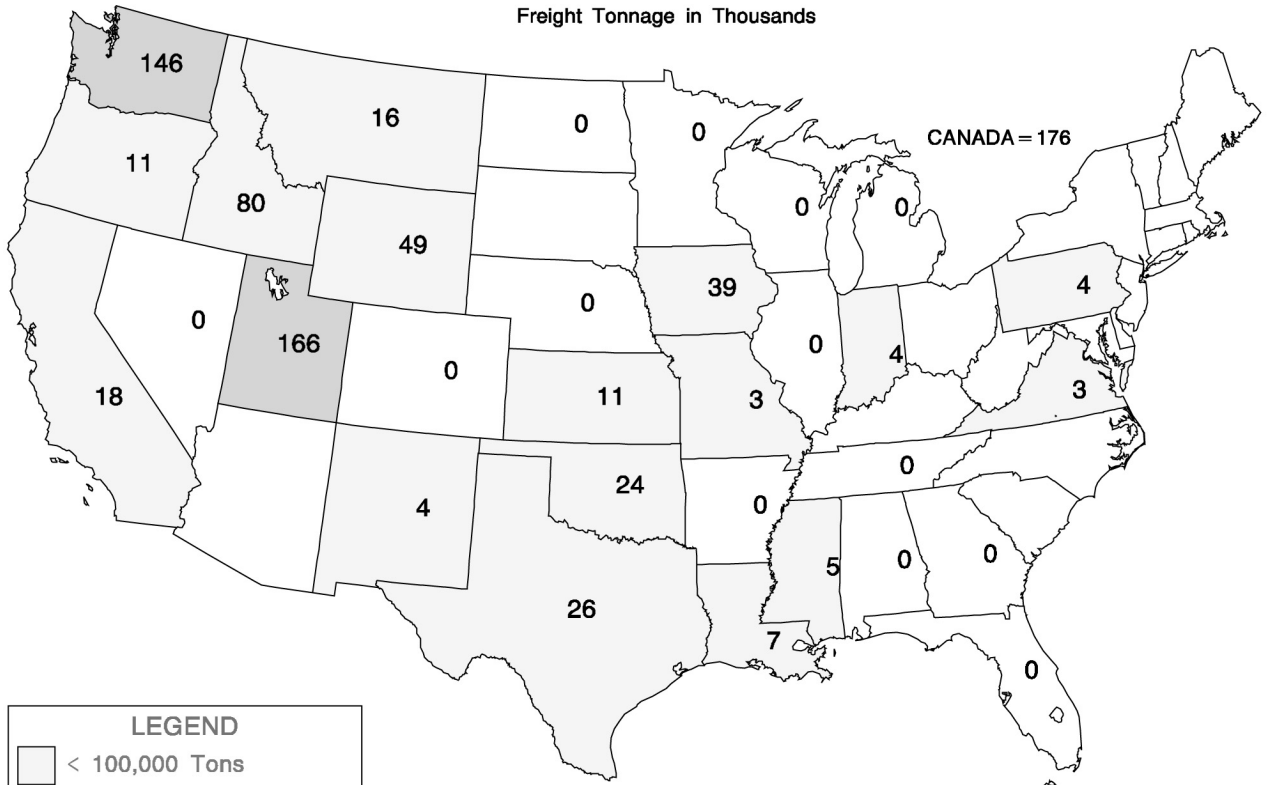


Figure 2-9

DATA SOURCE: 1993 ICC Waybill Sample

## **Traffic Density**

Figure 2-10 reveals the utilization of the Idaho rail system in terms of traffic density on each rail line. The measure used to depict traffic density on Figure 2-10 is million gross ton-miles per mile of track. Gross tons are comprised of the weight of locomotives, rolling stock and lading (freight). A traffic density figure of 5.0 shown on the map, for example, indicates that 5.0 million gross ton-miles per mile moved over the particular line segment in the year of record.

Examination of Figure 2-10 reveals why the BN and MRL main lines in the northern part of the state are FRA principal lines as they transported in excess of 20 million gross ton-miles in 1993. The UP line which runs through the same area, the former Spokane International running from Spokane to the Canadian border at Eastport, is a secondary main falling into the between 5 and 20 million ton-mile category. Southern Idaho served by an east-west UP main which also transports in excess of 20 million gross ton-miles and a UP 5-20 million secondary main running north-south. Most of the remaining lines in the state fall into the FRA light density line category as they handled less than 5 million gross ton-miles per mile in 1993.

## **State Rail System Description by Districts**

The Idaho Transportation Department has six jurisdictional districts, which correspond to the state's planning districts. Figure 2-11 shows the state rail and highway systems by District. A description of the rail system and traffic by district follows.

### **District 1**

District 1 is located in the northern part of the Idaho Panhandle (see Figure 2-12) and is served by both the BN and UP as well as by the MRL and the STMA. The BN line between the Pacific Northwest and the Twin Cities runs through Rathdrum, Sandpoint and Bonners Ferry. The line is not only a very heavily traveled freight line, but is also home to Amtrak's Empire Builder. The UP has a secondary main (the former Spokane International) which originates in Spokane, Washington and is used to interchange traffic with the Canadian Pacific at Eastport, a border crossing. The MRL enters Idaho from Montana and its trackage terminates in Sandpoint, but it continues to operate to Spokane by way of trackage rights over the BN. Branch lines of both the BN and the UP serve Coeur d'Alene and a branch line of the UP reaches Plummer from Spokane where it interchanges traffic with the STMA which runs from Plummer through St. Maries to Bovill. Another branch line, this one the BN's, runs west from Sandpoint to Newport, Washington, where it connects with the Pend Oreille Valley Railroad. This line used to continue to Spokane, as it formerly served as the Great Northern Railroad's main line.

**Table 2-4****RAIL TRAFFIC SUMMARY BY DISTRICT****1993**

<u>District</u>	<u>Originating</u> (000 Tons)	<u>Terminating</u> (000 Tons)	<u>Total</u> (000 Tons)
1	1,475	420	1,895
2	583	174	757
3	1,769	1,569	3,338
4	1,545	1,183	2,728
5	6,299	4,635	10,934
6	<u>1,094</u>	<u>215</u>	<u>1,309</u>
Totals	12,765	8,196	20,961

---

Source: 1993 ICC Railroad Waybill Sample

The principal rail traffic originated in District 1, accounting for 95 percent of the total and 1.4 million tons (see Table 2-4), is lumber or wood products. It is also the largest commodity terminated in the District at 280,000 tons (66 percent of the total). This tonnage is attributed to the large number of saw and studmills located in the District along with veneer and panel (plywood, wafer board, and particle board) manufacturers. Thus, District 1's rail system is used principally to transport through traffic over the main lines of several railroads and to ship the area's lumber or wood products.

**District 2**

There are no rail lines in District 2, in the southern part of the Idaho Panhandle (see Figure 2-13), that are of the main line character of those in District 1. Rather, the rail lines in this District exist to serve local rail shippers. The lines are physically and operationally connected to the rest of the national rail system through Washington State. The BN in District 2 is comprised of three entrees: (1) The former P& L Subdivision from Marshall (Spokane) which now terminates in Moscow. Although its tracks still run to Arrow Junction east of Lewiston, that portion has been out of service for ten years; (2) The WI&M, a former Potlatch railroad and Milwaukee Road line, acquired after the Milwaukee went bankrupt, which connects with the STMA at Bovill; and (3) The Camas Prairie Railroad (CSP), the joint UP-BN operation which serves Lewiston and parts of District 2 to the east and south through branches that run to Revling (near Pierce), Kooskia and Grangeville. The UP also



# STATE OF IDAHO RAILROAD LOCATION MAP

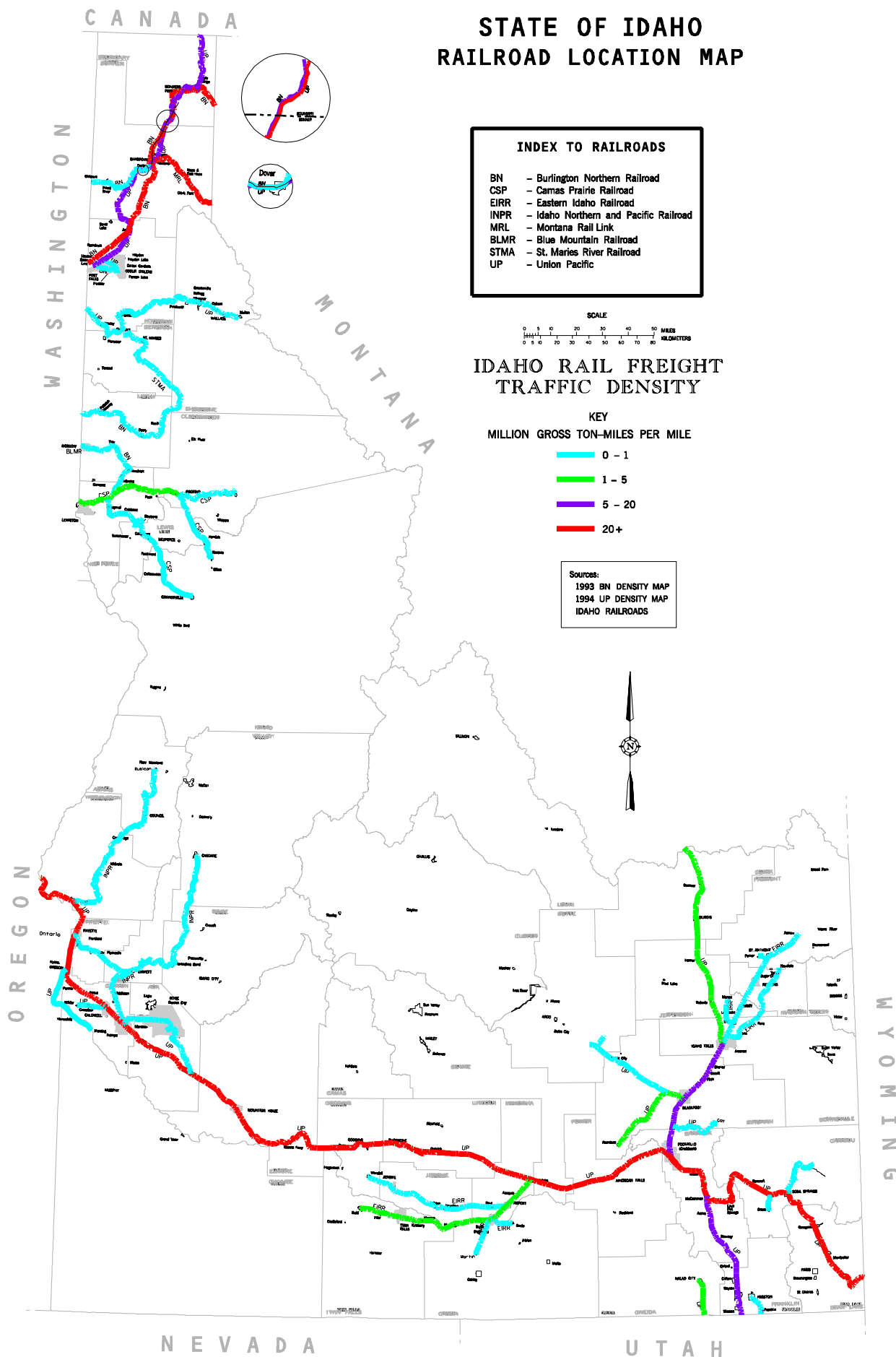


Figure 2-10



# STATE OF IDAHO RAILROAD LOCATION MAP and STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

## INDEX TO RAILROADS

- BN - Burlington Northern Railroad
- CSP - Camas Prairie Railroad
- EIRR - Eastern Idaho Railroad
- INPR - Idaho Northern and Pacific Railroad
- MRL - Montana Rail Link
- BLMR - Blue Mountain Railroad
- STMA - St. Maries River Railroad
- UP - Union Pacific

## SCALE

0 5 10 20 30 40 50 MILES  
0 5 10 20 30 40 50 KILOMETERS

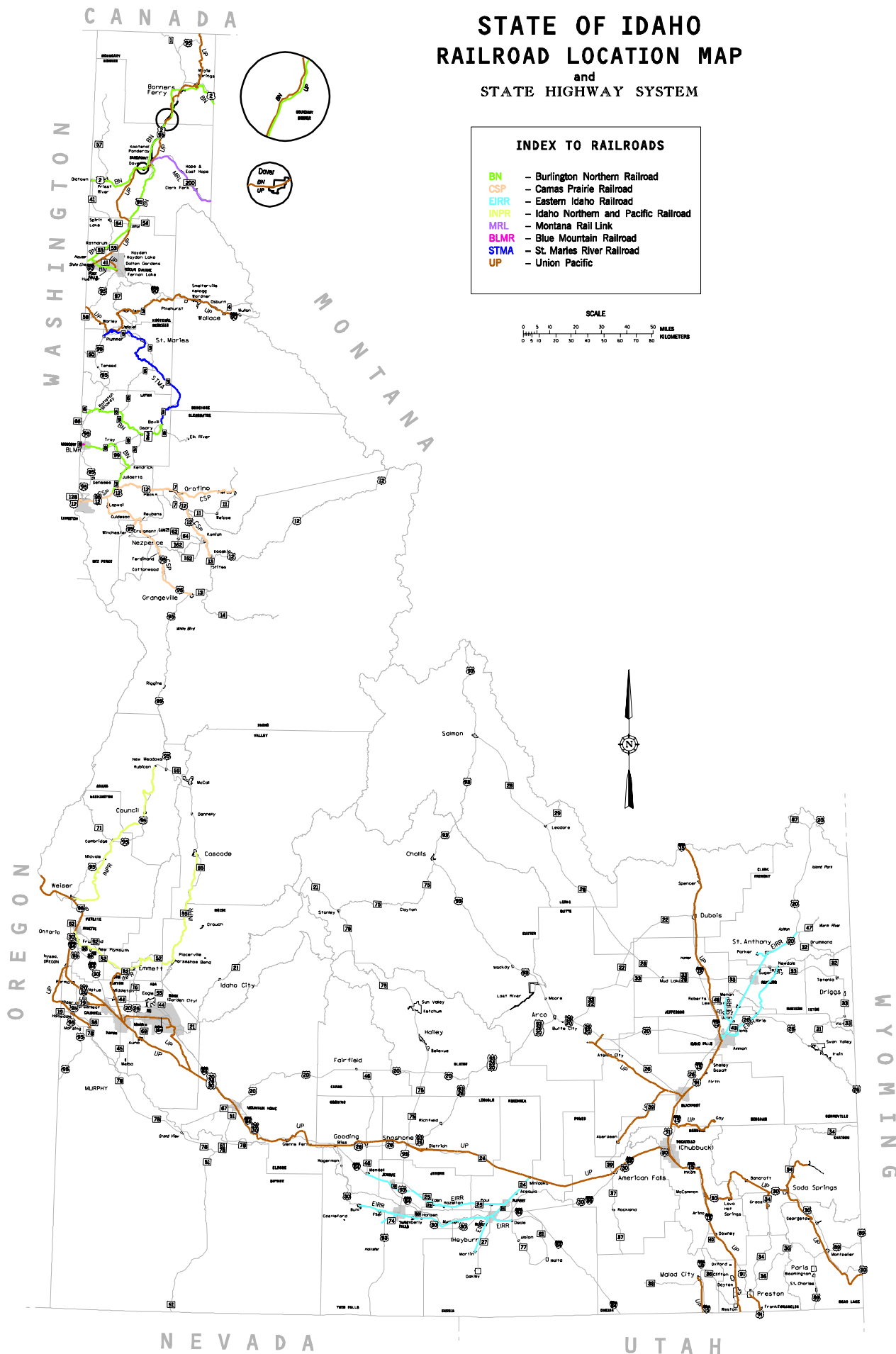


Figure 2-11

# District One STATE OF IDAHO RAILROAD LOCATION MAP

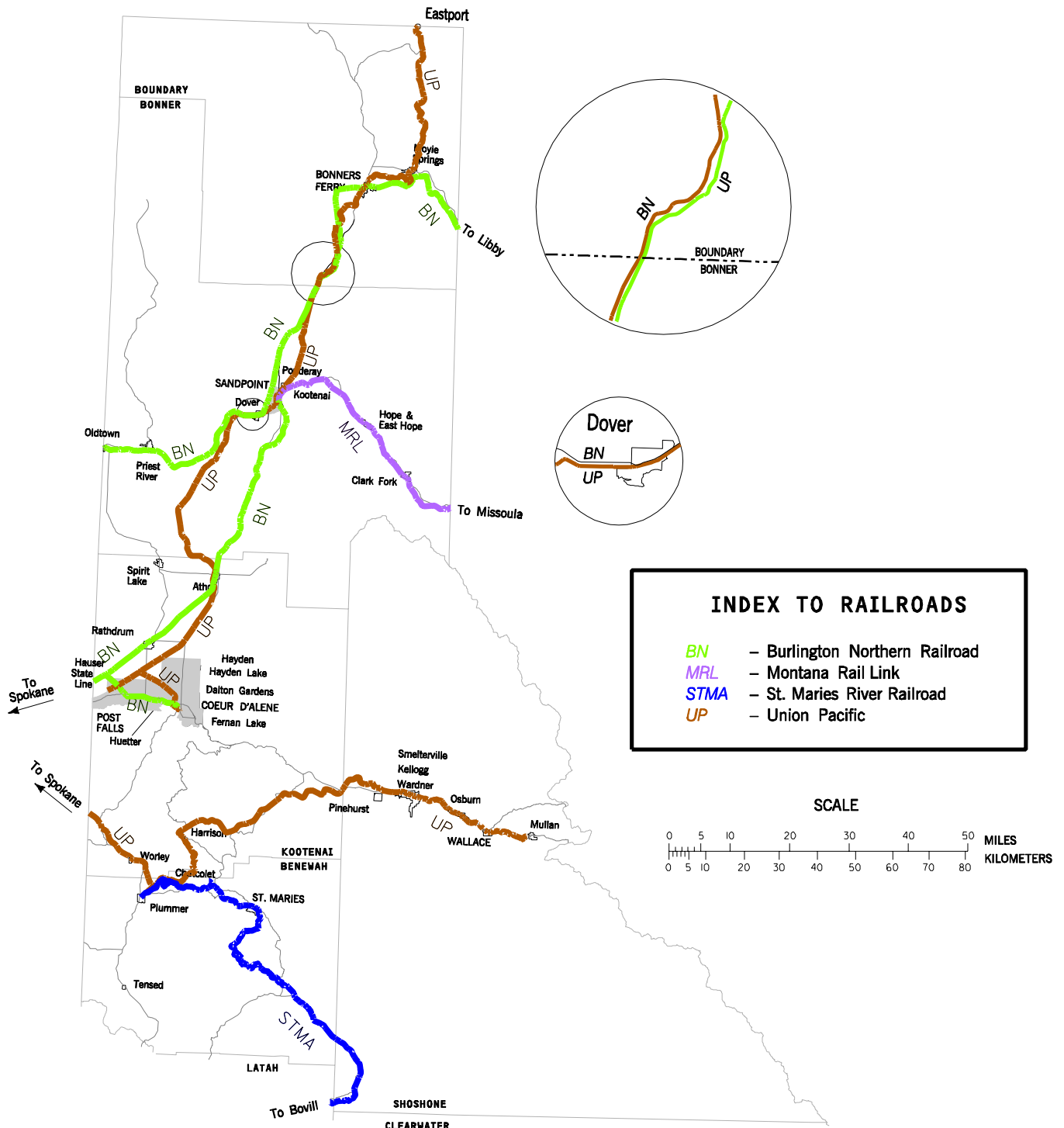


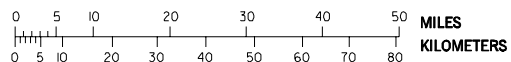
Figure 2-12



# District Two STATE OF IDAHO RAILROAD LOCATION MAP



SCALE



## INDEX TO RAILROADS

- BN** - Burlington Northern Railroad
- CSP** - Camas Prairie Railroad
- BLMR** - Blue Mountain Railroad
- STMA** - St. Maries River Railroad

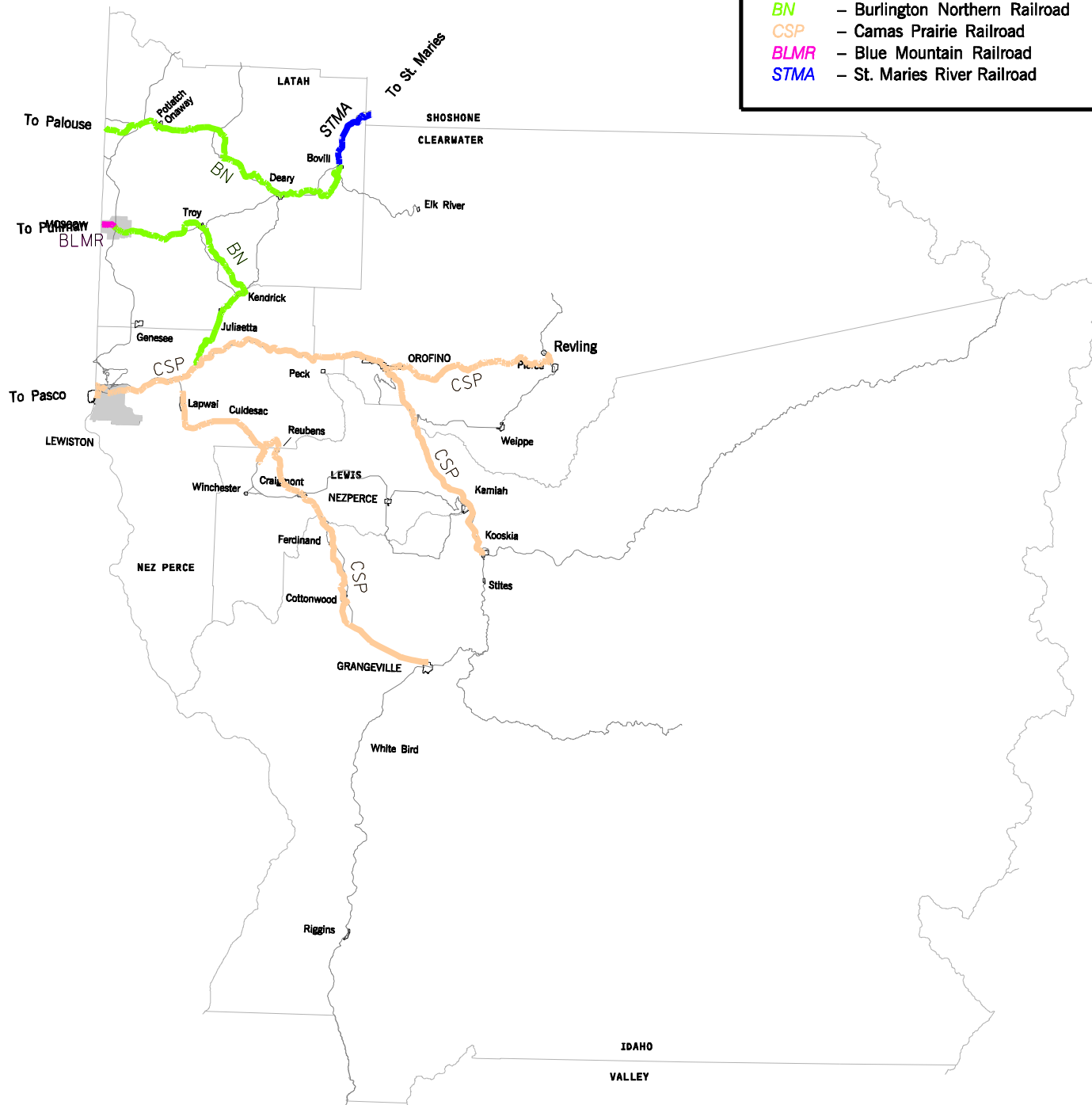


Figure 2-13

served the area with a line from Pullman, Washington to Moscow which is now being operated by the Blue Mountain Railroad, another short line operator.

The rail traffic of District 2 is a little more varied than that of District 1. While originating commodities are still principally lumber or wood products (49 percent at 280,000 tons) as lumber mills are still numerous, farm products and pulp, paper of allied products together make up 46 percent of that traffic. Farm products are derived from the Palouse and Camas Prairie, and Lewiston is the location of the state's only pulp and paper mill and the Port of Lewiston. Inbound commodities are dominated by chemicals at 65 percent of the 174,000 tons terminated which are destined for the farms of the area and the pulp mill.

### **District 3**

District 3, in southwestern Idaho (See Figure 2-14), is served by the UP's main line track which runs between the Midwest and the Pacific Northwest and a variety of UP branch lines and former UP branch lines spun off to the INPR. The originating rail traffic in this District is dominated by a few commodities -- farm, food and lumber or wood products. The three commodities each roughly represent one third of the total traffic originated (1.8 million tons). The terminating traffic is diverse, probably due to the location of the Boise urban area, although almost 53 percent of it (825,000 tons) is attributed to one commodity, farm products. The area contains a number of sawmills and facilities which manufacture doors, beams and similar wood products. It also contains a number of food processing facilities which account for the outbound food products and some of the inbound farm products.

A UP branch serves Boise while the main line passes to the south of the city itself. The branch is also used by Amtrak's Pioneer to reach Boise using the UP main line for the rest of its trip through the District, with stops in Nampa and Ontario, OR. There are UP branches from Caldwell to Wilder and Nyssa, Oregon to Marsing. The latter has appeared on the ICC System Diagram Map for several years, so it is potentially subject to abandonment at any time. Nampa is an important location as the hub of branch line activities, as well as being a crew change point. The INPR has lines from Payette to Emmett, and Emmett to Cascade. A INPR line from Weiser to Rubicon was recently approved for abandonment, as well as the UP line from Maddens (north of Nampa) to Emmett over which the INPR formerly had operating rights.

### **District 4**

The makeup of the rail system in District 4, south central Idaho (see Figure 2-15), is very similar to that of District 3 in that it is traversed by the same UP main line and also contains a number of former UP branch lines that have been spun off to a short line operator, in this case, the EIRR. The

branches spring from a common point on the main track, Minidoka, then to Rupert, with separate lines running from Rupert to Wendell, and Rupert to Burley to Buhl via Twin Falls and two shorter branches out of Burley. Amtrak's Pioneer moves over the main line with a stop in Shoshone.

Farm and food products comprise 99.3 percent (equating to just over 1.5 million tons) of the District's originating rail traffic. The originating rail traffic reflects the rural nature of the area and the location of numerous food processors. Inbound traffic consists of six principal commodities -- farm; food; pulp, paper; and chemical products; nonmetallic minerals; and coal. The six together comprise 95 percent of all inbound commodities.

### **District 5**

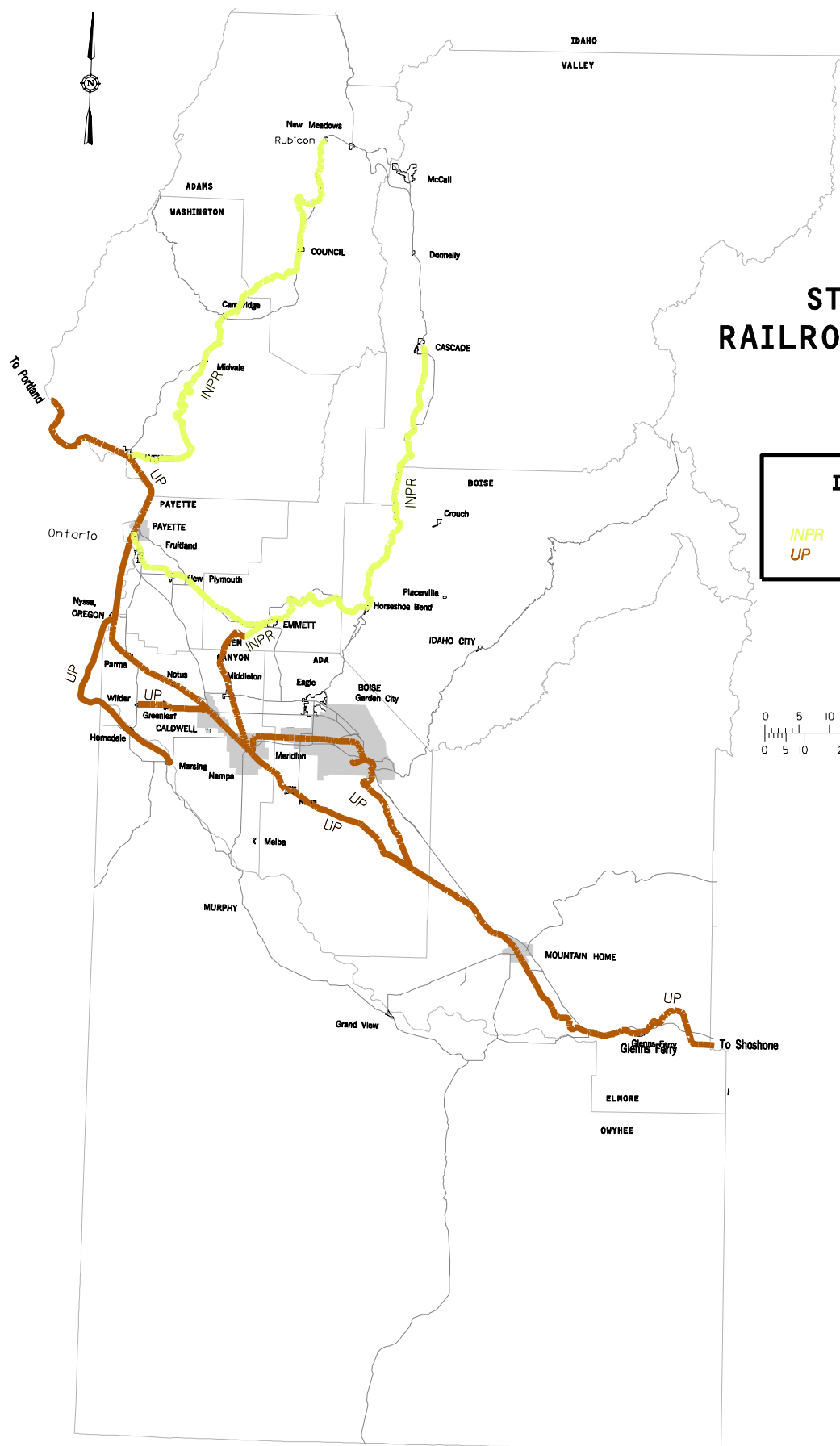
The railroads of District 5, the southern part of southeastern Idaho (see Figure 2-16), are comprised of the same UP east-west main line as that passing through Districts 3 and 4 to the west and Granger, Wyoming to the east, along with two secondary main tracks and several UP branch lines.

One of the secondary mains run from Pocatello north into District 6 and then into Montana where it connects with the Rarus Railway and the Montana Western at Silver Bow. The second runs from McCammon south into Utah where it connects with other UP lines and lines of other railroads at Ogden. Two branches reach into Idaho from Utah and terminate in the District at Malad and Preston. One branch line originates at Blackfoot and extends into District 6 where it terminates at Arco; another branch line from the same origin extends to Aberdeen. Shorter branch lines extend to the Gay mine, Conda mine and Grace. The Grace branch is pending abandonment before the Surface Transportation Board and the UP is expected to file a Notice of Exemption to abandon the Gay branch. Amtrak's Pioneer moves over the north-south main line between Ogden, Utah, and Pocatello and the east-west main line between Southwestern Idaho and Pocatello. Pocatello is the operational center for Union Pacific in the state. A major freight classification yard is located there, along with maintenance and repair facilities for locomotives, cars and track maintenance equipment.

Rail traffic in the District is the heaviest in terms of total tonnage of all the districts. It is comprised principally of nonmetallic minerals (almost 4 million tons originating and 4 million tons terminating) followed by farm products (1 million tons originating) and chemical products (1.3 million tons originating and terminating). The traffic is principally derived from the phosphate mining and related chemical production activity in the District.

### **District 6**

The rail system in District 6, the northern part of southeastern Idaho (see Figure 2-17), is comprised of the secondary UP main that originated in District 5 and continues on to Montana along with a number of former UP branch lines that have been spun off to the EIRR. Branches extend from Idaho



## District Three STATE OF IDAHO RAILROAD LOCATION MAP

### INDEX TO RAILROADS

- INPR - Idaho Northern and Pacific Railroad
- UP - Union Pacific

### SCALE

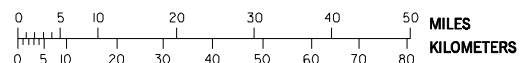


Figure 2-14

# District Four STATE OF IDAHO RAILROAD LOCATION MAP



## INDEX TO RAILROADS

- EIRR - Eastern Idaho Railroad
- UP - Union Pacific

## SCALE

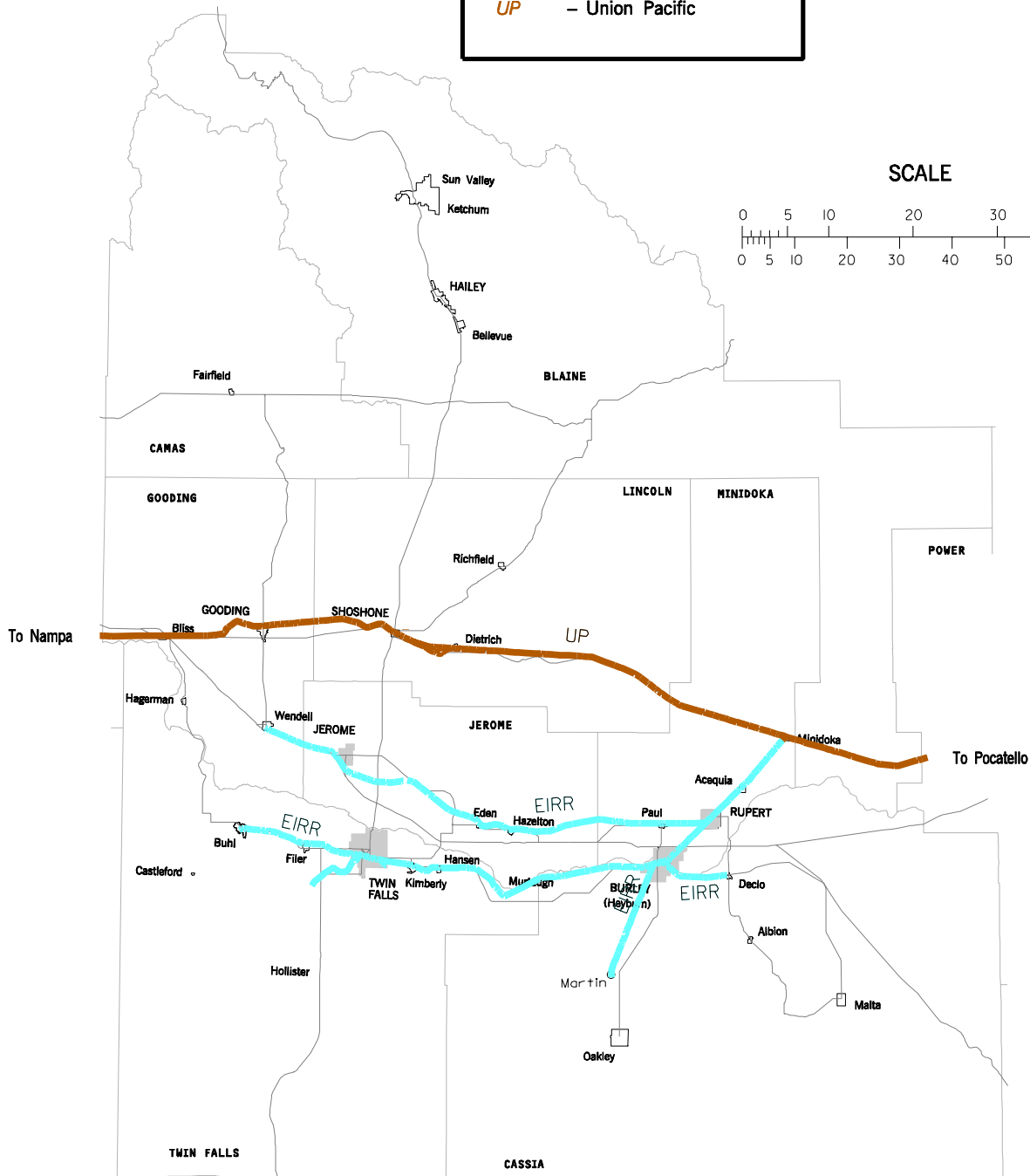
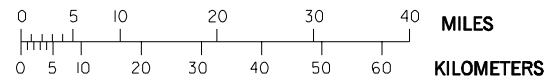


Figure 2-15

# District Five STATE OF IDAHO RAILROAD LOCATION MAP



## INDEX TO RAILROADS

UP – Union Pacific

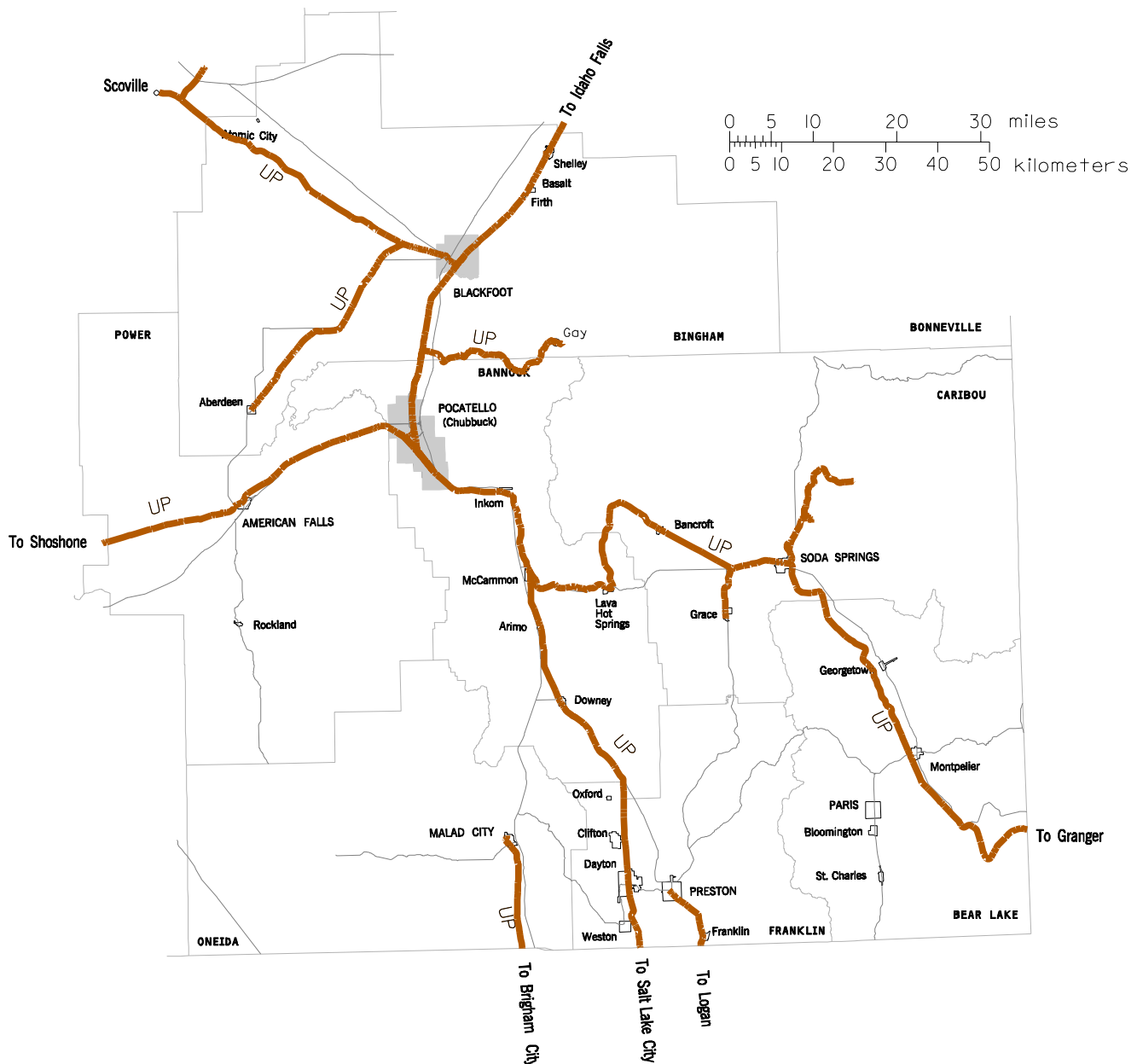


Figure 2-16



# District Six STATE OF IDAHO RAILROAD LOCATION MAP

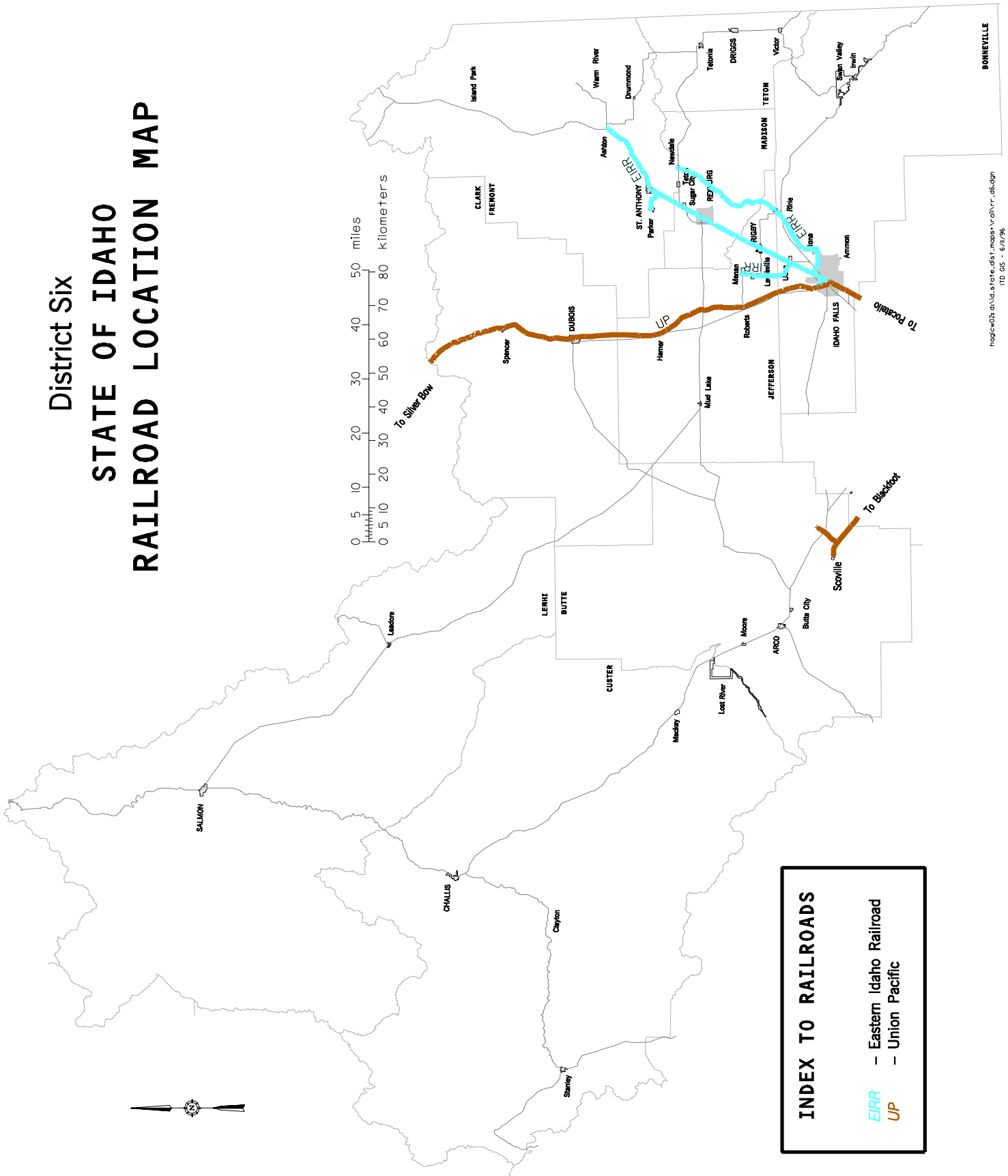


Figure 2-17

Falls to Ashton, Menan and Newdale. The District's rail traffic consists principally of farm and food products with a small amount of inbound chemicals, presumably agricultural in nature. Just over a million tons of rail freight are originated in the District and just over 200,000 are terminated.

### **Railroad Intermodal Facilities/Services**

Railroad intermodal traffic in the form of containers and trailers on flatcars has been a rapidly growing part of the industry's traffic. The introduction of equipment permitting the transportation of containers stacked on top of each other (double stacked) and the resulting economics accelerated this growth. There are, however, other forms of intermodal traffic, including transfers of bulk commodities between modes, that also occur in Idaho.

#### **Containers/Trailers**

The only railway-operated intermodal facility currently being operated in Idaho for the transfer and transport of trailers/containers is located in Nampa on the Union Pacific Railroad. The same railroad also formerly operated one in Pocatello. The Nampa facility, until recently, had the capability to only handle trailers, but it was recently mechanized to handle containers.

A new facility is to be constructed in Twin Falls on the Idaho Eastern Railroad. It is part of a larger project involving the relocation of yard trackage that is now in the center of town. It will be mechanized and is expected to originate and terminate a variety of traffic types although the predominant flow is anticipated to be outbound traffic.

The trend in railroad intermodal transportation has been to consolidate small terminals into large "hub" operations where the traffic volumes necessary to justify the investment in equipment and facilities can be generated. A necessary part of this concept is draying (moving by truck to the intermodal terminal) trailers/containers, sometimes over long distances, to these facilities in order to accumulate the required volumes. Drays of up to 200-250 miles are not unusual. There are also railroad facilities of these types located in neighboring states which serve the needs of Idaho shippers. One such is the BNSF hub in Spokane, Washington and another is the UP facility in Salt Lake City. Other nearby railroad intermodal terminals are located in Hinkle, Oregon and Green River, Wyoming.

#### **The Port of Lewiston**

Located 465 miles from the open sea, the Port of Lewiston is located at the head of slack water on the Columbia Snake Inland Waterway. The waterway at Lewiston is a 14-foot deep barge channel which feeds the deep-water ports of the lower Columbia. While grain and forest

products are the principal commodities moving on the river, containerized cargo has also flourished. The latter traffic is somewhat unique in that container-on-barge movements have not been successful on other river systems.

The opening of the Waterway had a tremendous impact on rail transportation in the area as many of the commodities now moving on the river formerly were transported by rail. Some area products, however, principally grain, now move to the river by rail and are transloaded to barge.

In addition to grain and wood product terminals, the Port has a mechanized container terminal which loads/unloads both barges and rail cars. The mix of traffic between rail and barge is dependent on market and deep water shipping service available at the different Pacific Northwest ports. Containers to be handled at Portland, for example, tend to move by barge and those to use Seattle or Tacoma will be transported by rail.

Inland transportation in Lewiston and serving the Port consists of U.S. Highways 12 and 95, both located on the National Highway System, along with the Camas Prairie Railroad. As the CSP is a BNSF-UP joint property, rail users have access to both of the parent companies.

### **International Border Crossing**

Eastport, located on the Canadian border near Kingsgate, B.C. is a rail and highway crossing. The highway is U.S. 95 and the railroad is the UP (former Spokane International) which connects with the Canadian Pacific at Eastport. In addition to the interchange of traffic between the two railroads, which takes place in a small yard, there is a privately operated lumber and wood products reload (transfer between rail and truck) facility. An application has been filed to establish a foreign trade zone in Eastport, which could eventually lead to Eastport becoming a major distribution center.

The border crossing is expected to undergo substantial growth in commercial traffic under NAFTA, especially truck traffic. Based on traffic density data contained in the UP-SP merger application, UP gross ton-miles per mile in 1994 totaled 5.3 million for the track segment at the crossing. This tonnage is just above the 5 million GTM/M used as the light density line threshold.

### **Other Intermodal Facilities**

One of the most common intermodal facilities found in Idaho is the grain elevator. Grain is trucked to an elevator from a farm or from another elevator which might not be rail served or lack unit-train capabilities. The grain is transloaded to rail for further shipment usually after some period of storage.

The same process occurs with other commodities such as lumber. The facilities that handle lumber are typically called reloads and there are also a number of them located throughout the state. Several of them have been created in response to line abandonments and are substitutes for direct rail service.

Perhaps the greatest number of such railway facilities is the team track, so named for the teams of horses that pulled wagons before the truck came into common use. These facilities are located in just about every community and usually consist of a short track with room to pull a truck up adjacent to it for the transfer of freight from one mode to the other.